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THE
STRUCTURE OF PARLIAMENTS
AT THE
ACCESSION OF GEORGE III

L. B. NAMIER

VOL. I

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PREFACE

IN 1912 I started work on "The Imperial Problem during the American Revolution"; a year later I had to enter business, but as this carried me across to America, where public libraries are open at night and on Sundays, I was not debarred from continuing my studies. I soon found, as so many have found before me, that the constitutional and political formulas of the problem were exceedingly simple, and the contemporary discussions of it very trite—which usually happens where masses act, but are supposed to reason. A re-statement of the arguments or an analysis of what is called "public opinion" would not get us much further; for political problems do not, as a rule, deeply affect the lives and consciousness of ordinary men, and little real thought is given them by these men, whose concerns, none the less, supply the basis of the problems and determine the course of their *development*.

• As the conflict of 1775 was more closely connected with everyday life in the American Colonies than in this country, America has by now entered as a community into the picture of the Revolution, while Great Britain remains more or less the figure on our copper coins; the notion of this country in the conflict needs to be humanised. As happens to most students of the American Revolution, I concentrated at first on the history of the Colonies; but, when I went to discuss my work with one of the most distinguished American historians, he, though friendly and helpful, asked me a very pertinent question. "On this,

side," he said, "there are ever so many of us doing the work; why do you not contribute something from your own side?" I saw that his remark was just, but took for the moment no further notice of it; still, it stuck in my mind, and a few months later, when reading the letters in which Edward Gibbon, writing in 1775, described how, while destroying the Roman Empire, he "supported the British" by voting with the Government, I became interested in the House of Commons which, in so ill-fated a manner, undertook the work of preserving the First British Empire. In the early summer of 1914 I returned to England for a holiday, and imagined that by the autumn I should be able to produce something on the British Parliament during the American Revolution. Being very young and deficient in sense of time, I did not realise that this would have to be the work of many years.

This first attempt had anyhow to be abandoned in August 1914; Army training and subsequently service under and in the Foreign Office took up the years 1914-20. Next I tried to resume my research work as a lecturer and tutor at Balliol, my old College. But excellent as our tutorial system is for the pupils, it leaves no leisure to the teachers, and I had to go once more into business. Looking back at the time in the Army, the Civil Service, and in business, *and at the influence those years have had on my historical work*, I am able to appreciate Gibbon's dictum that "the Captain of the Hampshire grenadiers . . . has not been useless to the historian of the Roman Empire".

By the time I resumed my work, some four years ago, I had decided to make it a study of the British "political nation" during the American Revolution, and to pursue it by concentrating on that marvellous microcosmos, the British House of Commons. But next I found that were I to attempt a narrative, however much of general analysis I put into the introductory chapters, lengthy digressions and appendices could not be avoided—too much in

eighteenth-century politics requires explaining. Between them and the politics of the present day there is more resemblance in outer forms and denominations than in underlying realities ; so that misconception is very easy. There were no proper party organisations about 1760, though party names and cant were current ; the names and the cant have since supplied the materials for an imaginary superstructure. A system of non-Euclidean geometry can be built up by taking a curve for basis instead of the straight line, but it is not easy for our minds to think consistently in unwonted terms ; Parliamentary politics not based on parties are to us a non-Euclidean system, and similarly require a fundamental readjustment of ideas and, what is more, of mental habits. A general explanation registering the outstanding differences may be understood but cannot be properly assimilated ; one has to steep oneself in the political life of a period before one can safely speak, or be sure of understanding, its language.

With that purpose in view I have written this book : it is, in a way, introductory to my main work. In the first chapter on " Why Men went into Parliament ", I take the reader through the House of Commons as constituted about the time of George III's accession, and I try to analyse it from the angle of purpose. Here is an ant-heap, with the humer ants hurrying in long files along their various paths ; their joint achievement does not concern us, nor the changes which supervene in their community, only the pathetically intent, seemingly self-conscious running of individuals along beaten tracks. In a future book I propose to deal in detail with the four Parliaments of 1761-1784, but here I mainly study types, and I deliberately refrain from discussing so-called parties and political groups, their meaning or lack of meaning ; the political life of the period could be fully described without ever using a party denomination. Next, in the essay on " The Electoral Structure of England ", I take the reader through

the constituencies, and be must not mind the time spent over details—we distinguish trees by considering their general shape and their characteristic details, for instance, the leaf or the bark; whilst seemingly more prominent features, such as the circumference, the number of branches, etc., can be safely disregarded, as can so many things which lend themselves best to historical narrative. The short essay on “The General Election of 1761” serves to show the way in which the political transactions of the time are frequently distorted in accounts based on a few “classical texts”. The fourth and last essay in the first volume of the book, on “Secret Service Money under the Duke of Newcastle”, deals with that ill-famed, subterranean stream of corruption which, when uncovered and measured, proves to have been after all but a small rivulet, not a river, and not nearly as dirty as generally supposed; it was the last resort of political beggars in distress, and of opposition leaders in search of a topic.

The second volume supplies further illustrations to the chapters on “The Electoral Structure” and “Secret Service Money”. First I take Shropshire, one of the most independent counties at that time, with the appearances of party organisation—but even there they prove unreal. Next, I take the notorious Cornish boroughs which, in relation to the Government, stood at the opposite pole to Shropshire. Lastly, I analyse Harwich and Orford, two boroughs under the immediate management of the Treasury. I add at the end a few biographical sketches of Members who drew secret service pensions—they show once more the charitable character of that very humane institution, and the utter unimportance of the acquisitions which the Government made through it.

In an appendix I reproduce the secret service accounts of the Duke of Newcastle; the footnotes will enable the reader to gauge the character of these payments.

When thanking those who have enabled me to do my

work, I have to start with two men who have helped hundreds of students of history, the late Mr. A. L. Smith, Master of Balliol, and Walter John, fourth Earl of Chichester. It is difficult for me to speak here about Mr. A. L. Smith, who was much more than a teacher to us old Balliol men; he was our friend and guardian to whom we turned for help and advice, and who often helped us without our asking or even knowing. But the particular reason why the first place in the work of his pupils is due to him, perhaps the best history teacher of our time, is that he devoted his life to tutorial work, with the result that he, who had the makings of a very great historian, left no written record—barring a few essays and lectures—by which he would be known and remembered. His work has been merged into that of his pupils.

Lord Chichester, whom I have mentioned together with the late Master, in 1886 presented the British Museum with some 500 volumes of the Newcastle Papers, one of the most valuable collections of political manuscripts in existence. But as he has given them to “whomever they may concern”, the gift and the donor are passed over in silence, or rather appear anonymously in footnotes as Add. MSS. 32679-33201. One needs to have been a pupil of Mr. A. L. Smith to know how much we owe him, and one needs to have spent a few years on the Newcastle Papers to know the value of Lord Chichester’s gift.

I am very grateful to the Marquess of Bute, K.T., and the Earl of Sandwich, for having in the most liberal way given me access to their important collections of manuscripts. Comparatively few references to their manuscripts appear in this book; they will be used more extensively in my work on “The Imperial Problem during the American Revolution”.

As I mentioned before, I suffer from a very imperfect sense of time; the work on these two volumes has taken me much longer than I had expected, and I could hardly

have completed it without some financial assistance. Two years ago the Rhodes Trustees made me a grant for my researches, for which my grateful acknowledgment is due to them, and my friend Mr. J. W. Wheeler-Bennett offered me a loan, which I gladly accepted ; and last year a friend, who desires to remain anonymous, further endowed my work.

However much I am indebted to those mentioned above, were I to choose one person to whom to dedicate this book I should have no doubt to whom that was due. Mrs. Edgar Dugdale has helped me at almost every step ; with her I discussed every chapter before it was written, and she patiently read through the successive drafts down to the proofs, and advised me in things big and small. There was many a moment when, without the encouragement and help which she gave me, I should have had to drop the work altogether. How much I owe her, only her friends can understand.

I have to thank Mr. C. G. Stone for having systematically gone through my proofs, line by line, and suggested innumerable corrections, enforced at critical moments by the threat that, if I did not make them, he would not allow me to mention his having read the proofs. Miss M. Beer and Mrs. Denis Buxton have done for me the laborious work of checking the quotations and references in this book, a signal act of friendship. Miss C. Le Marinel has been my secretary, and I owe much to her devoted, untiring work.

In transcribing manuscripts I have, on the whole, adhered to the original spelling, but I do not reproduce disturbing graphical signs such as “y^e”, “y^t”, “&”, etc., or capitals, of which the eighteenth century was very lavish ; nor do I adhere to the original punctuation where it interferes with the sense of the letter or document.

I refrain from adding a bibliography. There can be

none for the life of a community; I hardly remember having come across any contemporary materials, or any book reproducing such materials, which did not contribute something to my information.

I wish, however, to mention here works which I have used too often to quote in footnotes on separate occasions: G. E. C.'s *Complete Peerage* and *Complete Baronetage* and especially the new edition of the *Peerage*, one of the best works of the kind ever compiled; the various editions of Burke's *Peerage* and *Landed Gentry*; Joseph Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses* and *Members of Parliament, Scotland*; J. and J. A. Venn's *Alumni Cantabrigienses*; W. R. Williams's *Parliamentary History of Wales* and of Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, and Worcestershire, Pink's and Beavan's *Parliamentary Representation of Lancashire*, J. C. Wedgwood's *Parliamentary History of Staffordshire*, H. T. Weyman's essays on Shropshire Members in the *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society*; Haydn's *Book of Dignities*, and Beatson's *Political Register*; and last but not least, the Blue Book of 1878 giving the lists of Members of Parliament.

L. B. NAMIER.

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I

WHY MEN WENT INTO PARLIAMENT

WHY MEN WENT INTO PARLIAMENT

"You will be of the House of Commons as soon as you are of age", wrote Lord Chesterfield to his son, Philip Stanhope, on December 5, 1749; "and you must first make a figure there if you would make a figure in your country". Small boys play at kings and soldiers, or at riders, engine-drivers, chauffeurs, and flying men—the material expression of that fancy varies with methods of locomotion. But for several centuries the dream of English youth and manhood of the nation-forming class has remained unchanged; it has been fixed and focussed on the House of Commons, a modified, socialised arena for battle, drive, and dominion. "To be out of Parliament is to be out of the world", wrote Admiral Sir George Rodney to Lord George Germain from the West Indies in 1780, "and my heart is set upon my being in".¹ Democracy, by enlarging the circle of the *citoyens actifs*, has carried this ambition into ever wider circles, and now many a small branch secretary of a trade union or local mayor thinks of his own future in Lord Chesterfield's terms: "You must make a figure there if you would make a figure in your country".

So many candidates and only some six hundred seats for them to fill—and yet not many men with an enduring

¹ *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Ninth Report, part iii.; *Stopford Sackville MSS.* pp. 102-3. Letter dated Sandwich, St. Christopher's, August 2, 1780. Rodney had sat previously in the House of Commons, 1751-54 and 1759-74.

will to get there fail to enter the House, in which a miracle of seats seems to be performed for every generation. In the eighteenth century it did not perhaps require much of a miracle. About 1760 in Great Britain certainly not more than 70,000 men a year attained majority, and, on a very conservative estimate, the yearly average of new men entering the House of Commons can be put at about fifty; moreover, of those who attained majority a certain number died before realising a reasonable expectation of a seat, and still more before losing a less well-founded hope. As the educated classes were even percentually less numerous than they are now, and men in holy orders—deemed ineligible to the House—formed a far higher proportion among them, it is hardly astonishing to find (*e.g.* on examining the Newcastle Papers, the biggest mass of election correspondence in existence) how very few among those who desired to enter the House of Commons failed to get a chance. But that it was open to all who could reasonably aspire to it had a wonderfully unifying and stimulating influence on the nation.

Men went there “to make a figure”, and no more dreamt of a seat in the House in order to benefit humanity than a child dreams of a birthday cake that others may eat it; which is perfectly normal and in no way reprehensible. The “figure” of their day-dreams differed with their rank and profession, with age, temperament, and circumstances; but so much was common to practically all—the seat in the House was not their ultimate goal, but a means to ulterior aims.

PREDESTINATION: THE INEVITABLE PARLIAMENT MEN

Those aims were least distinct and pronounced with a type which might be described as the “inevitable” or “predestined Parliament men”—for whom membership of the House was a duty, whatever were their individual

predilections or ambitions. The eldest sons of politically active peers had to enter the House of Commons as soon as they were of age ; they owed it to their families and to their own future position, " M.P." after their names being a kind of Parliamentary courtesy title, preparatory to the peerage. At the general election of 1761 twenty-three *eldest* sons of English peers were returned to Parliament ;¹ the age of twenty-one among them, when first elected to the House, was twenty-six or below—they had not missed a single general election after having come of age ; the remaining two were twenty-nine and thirty.²

In leading political families—old aristocratic houses or families which can best be described as the " aftermath " of great men—the " predestination " of Parliament extended even to younger sons. The House of Commons of 1761 contained—these are examples, not an enumeration—five Townshends (one of them brilliant) and three Cornwallises, five members of the Manners family (one of them illegitimate) and four Cavendishes (one a Cavendish only by marriage and assumed name) ; and three Walpoles and four Yorkes. The Walpoles in Parliament were a mere " aftermath " by 1761 ; with the Yorkes, the schemings of the great man were still at work, which places their group, as an " aftermath ", on the border-line. In 1761, besides four sons, Hardwicke had a son-in-law, Sir Gilbert Heath-

¹ The eldest sons of Scottish and Irish peers are omitted from this calculation, even if their fathers sat at Westminster by some English title. For in Scotland the eldest sons of Scottish peers were debarred from standing for Parliament ; whilst among the Irish peers, one must distinguish between the Irish territorial magnates who frequently had some English title, but whose sons would more naturally enter the Dublin Parliament, at least to begin with, and the pseudo-Irish peers, Englishmen who were given Irish titles because they were not considered of sufficient rank for an English peerage. These usually themselves sat in the Commons.

² To make it perfectly clear : this was their age at *first entering* the House, not in 1761 if they had sat in it before.

cote, and two nephews of his wife, Charles Cocks and Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, in the House. "It is . . . a good thing for you and *your fraternity*", he wrote to his eldest son on Knatchbull's return at a by-election in 1760; "for an extensive alliance in the House of Commons is a thing of figure and weight in the countrey".¹

Country gentlemen in possession or control of some borough or single seat, which they never put up for sale but occupied in their own persons, formed another species of "inevitable Parliament men". It is impossible precisely to state their number, as the type itself cannot be precisely defined; one can merely say who were not of it, and give examples of those who were. Clearly the younger sons of peers must not be included, nor members of Cornish families which professionally dealt in boroughs and filled one or two seats themselves, nor men with no real tradition behind them, nor, lastly, knights of the shires whose tenure of seats was of a very different character; but families such as the Listers of Clitheroe and the Leghs of Newton² (Lancs), the Whitmores of Bridgnorth and the Foresters of Wenlock, the Burrards of Lymington and the Barringtons of Newton (Hants), the Drakes of Agmondesham, the A'Courts of Heytesbury, the Rashleighs of Fowey, etc. etc. Most of these, though by no means all, sat for burgage-boroughs, and found themselves in the House because a seat in it happened to form part of their inheritance; very roughly their number can be put in 1761 at about twenty-five to thirty.

Still, even men who entered the House without design, once they were in it and on the side of Administration, had to profit by it in one way or another, almost as if they had gone there for the purpose (after a month in the army there is no difference between conscripts and volunteers). As

¹ Add. MSS. 35352, f. 139.

² These are, of course, the "Leghs of Lyme", but here in each case I name the constituency and not the estate of the family.

the exhilarating Parliamentary game between party teams was not played in 1761, and men do not go into politics for their health, clearly some other rational aim had to be provided ; and if a man after a certain term in Parliament had nothing to show for it, one was forced to conclude that he was an insignificant and neglected person, " not an object worthy of consideration ". The only people who were under no such obligation to profit were the " Tories " or " country gentlemen " in the reign of George II, and the Opposition and " country gentlemen " in the reign of George III.

HONOUR WITH EASE: THE COUNTRY GENTLEMEN

Two distinct types are included above under " predestined Parliament men ": members of political families, who were born to hunt with certain Parliamentary " packs ", and the country gentlemen, with seats for heir-looms, who had not as a rule their course mapped out to the same extent. These, as they sat " in their own right ", could go whichever way they chose, and some of them adhered in a more or less disinterested manner to " the main Corps of the Whigs ", others carefully cultivated their own interests, whilst most ranked under George II as " Tories ", and not by social standing alone, but also by their bearing in Parliament, linked up with the group known *par excellence* as " the country gentlemen ".

What was the exact meaning of that designation ? After all, the vast majority of the House of Commons was composed of men of that class. The emphasis was on the word *country*—they were the " Country Party " as contrasted with that of the Court. To these men alone the House was not as a rule " a means to ulterior aims ", though it was not their " ultimate goal " either. They would not have accepted a seat in it at random, merely to be seated. What mattered to them was not so much

membership of the House, as the primacy in their own "country" attested by their being chosen to represent their county or some respectable borough. The Commons were the *communitas communitatum*, originally a quasi-federation of shires and boroughs; the knights of the shire in the eighteenth century were the consuls of the county republics. This primacy in most cases rested on a tradition, and therefore the seats were in that sense hereditary. Still, any substantial country gentleman who had gained the respect of his neighbours had a reasonable chance, while over-emphasis of a hereditary claim was liable to injure a candidate, for he would lay himself open to the accusation of disrespect to his neighbours in treating the county as if it was a pocket borough. Similarly in Parliament county members had to avoid all appearance that anything counted for more with them than the approval of their constituents.

This type has therefore to be distinguished even from the most independent representatives of hereditary boroughs. It was in men of this type that Pitt found his "constituency" in the House, and to them he used to pay the greatest attention. "Mr. Pitt", complained Newcastle to Hardwicke on March 15, 1760, "by his situation and consequence is at the head of the House of Commons, of which the Tories scarce make a sixth part; and all *extrajudicial* business is to be agreed and concerted with them, without any notice taken of our friends, who compose the majority of the House of Commons. . . ."¹ A list of the country gentlemen in the eighteenth-century Parliament reads like a register of "county families". To give just a few examples taken at random—to that type belonged the Courtenays, Bamfylde, and Rolles of Devonshire; the Cholmondeleys and Egertons of Cheshire; the Ishams, Knightleys, and Cartwrights of Northamptonshire; a Lambton or Tempest from Durham or a Sir Walter Blackett from Newcastle-

¹ Add. MSS. 32903, f. 297.

upon-Tyne ; also Sir George Savile, of Yorkshire, though in mind and outlook he was far superior to the average of his class and type.

For the distinguishing characteristics of the "country gentlemen" were as a rule neither political acumen and experience, nor Parliamentary eloquence, but an independent character and station in life, and indifference to office. Most of them were accounted "Tories" under George II, only to find themselves once more in opposition under George III, as his reign gradually convinced them that by whatever names courts and administrations go, their essence remains the same. In fact, the country gentlemen were practically in a standing opposition, and Henry Penruddocke Wyndham, himself one of them, in his introduction to Bubb Dodington's "Diary", in 1784, addressed to them a few words of warning and spoke of that "restless aversion to all government, so prevalent amongst them, and against which, the best Minister is no more secure than the worst". Had their type numerically predominated in the House before discipline was established through party organisations and party electorates, although no Englishman would ever have gone the way of the Polish gentry and their anarchical Diets, yet the activities even of the English country gentlemen would not have proved conducive to the formation of a strong and stable Government. Fortunately their number, though sufficient to supply an independent leaven to the House and a respectable lead in important divisions, and thereby to retrieve to some extent its character, was not such as could have disturbed its every-day work. About 1760 their number was something like sixty to eighty, most of them representing counties or considerable boroughs.

Moreover, their attendance on political business was naturally much less regular than that of office-holders and of interested, professional politicians. On September 8, 1741,

Lord Chesterfield, writing to Bubb Dodington, pointed out how necessary and how impossible it was to get the Opposition to meet before Parliament assembled: "I have been these seven years endeavouring to bring it about, and have not been able; fox-hunting, gardening, planting, or indifference having always kept our people in the country, till the very day before the meeting of the Parliament". Five years later Sir Edward Turner, M.P., wrote about country gentlemen (in a bantering letter to a friend): "Persons of that denomination seem to have forgot public affairs. Few of their representatives have appeared at the House this session."¹ Nor did Newcastle find it any easier to secure their regular attendance when in opposition.² Critical but "of little efficiency in public business", these men were no real politicians. As, however, they seldom suffered from ebullitions of wit or spasms of originality, once party organisations had arisen, they were easily absorbed by them, forming a body both respectable and reliable, in Houses anyhow superior in moral tone to those of a naïvely corrupt and very amusing age.

THE TREASURY BENCH: THE POLITICIANS

Dreams of office and power as motives of action—the Treasury Bench and the "Marshal's stick"—what is there to be said about them? These dreams are almost universal and usually unavowed; who has not dreamt of them? And what a long time it takes before such dreams leave men's fancy! This is matter for biography such as is never written, but hardly for a history of the House of Commons; for these dreams do not change into demands until near realisation, which is, of course, of rare occurrence.

¹ December 6, 1746. See *An Eighteenth-Century Correspondence* (1910), edited by L. Dickens and M. Stanton, p. 124.

² See, e.g., pp. 364-5.*

What should, however, be noted is that even in eighteenth-century England, dreams of attaining the highest positions in the State could be entertained by any member of what may best be described as "the political nation". A wide class of active citizens was raised above the masses; and though this high plateau had not the even outline, say, of the Athenian political community, anyhow it was not overtowered by inaccessible peaks. Undoubtedly a courtesy lord had a marked advantage (as he has even now) in obtaining a seat and office, but the difference in the start has never been such that others could not have overcome it by superior ability and merit. In fact, personality, eloquence, debating power, prestige, counted for more in the eighteenth-century House of Commons (which at all times contained a certain number of Members whose votes could be turned by the debate) than it does now, unless the "whips" are taken off, an exceedingly rare event. General elections, however big the apparent majorities they yielded, did not settle the event of the sessions—witness Newcastle's worries in September 1754 when he had no first-class leader to put at the head of his enormous majority; and Lady Yarmouth, voicing the opinion of the Court, told him then that "*they* all" applauded his conduct "in the choice of Parliament, but that somebody must take the lead in the House of Commons".¹ A year later, having received little or no support from Pitt, Fox, or Legge, Newcastle wrote to Holderness, who was with the King at Hanover:

His Majesty has certainly as great a majority in the present House of Commons as ever was known. But the misfortune is that persons in the first stations there, in His Majesty's service, have not supported the King's measures in the manner they ought to have done; and, if they were to be remov'd, none could be found, whose talents and Parliamentary abilities would enable them to

¹ Newcastle to William Murray, September 28, 1754; Add. MSS. 32736, ff. 591-4.

carry on the King's business with ease and success against such an opposition.¹

"Talents and Parliamentary abilities" were required to conduct the business in the House itself—generalship in the field, not gifts of calculation far behind the front. Newcastle's surrender to Pitt shows what chances the eighteenth-century Parliament offered to personality.

Some ten years later, when the Rockingham Government was tottering to its fall, a meeting was held of the "King's friends", "of gentlemen who could discourse in confidence with each other on the present state of affairs". In reviewing the state of parties, they thus described their own group and position :

Those who have always hitherto acted upon the sole principle of attachment to the Crown. This is probably the most numerous body and would on trial be found sufficient to carry on the public business themselves if there was any person to accept of a ministerial office at the head of them, and this is all they want. This defect, however, makes it necessary that they should be joined if it be possible to some one of the other parties.²

Thus the position of 1756 was reproduced in 1766—the influence of the Crown could secure and command numbers, but not leaders ; and the real leader counted for at least as much in the scales as the "voting herd". George III had to surrender to Pitt, as his grandfather and Newcastle had done before him.

Yet Newcastle and Pitt (and Burke) are quoted by historians to prove the close oligarchic character of the eighteenth-century Parliament ; and so widely accepted is this legend that it cannot be here ignored, though I must defer to another occasion any full treatment of the subject.

Newcastle's rise to a post to which he was not equal, is

¹ July 11, 1755 ; Add. MSS. 32857, ff. 37-9.

² Add. MSS. 38339, ff. 307-10.

ascribed to his vast borough influence, and the fact is overlooked that only a very small part of it was truly his own, whilst most was derived from his official position under the Crown. Indeed, at the close of his life, after he had sacrificed a large part of his fortune to electioneering, and moreover for more than forty years had used the resources of the Crown to strengthen and extend his own Parliamentary interest, the total number of seats to which he could nominate was about twelve, and even in some of these his influence was mainly personal (the Yorkshire boroughs of Aldborough and Boroughbridge alone, Newcastle could describe as "my own two boroughs";¹ to these four seats can be added another four in Nottinghamshire, where in each constituency—the county, Nottingham, Newark and Retford—he could by compromise and arrangement with other people nominate one Member; and similarly about four in Sussex, in the county and the boroughs of Lewes, Seaford, and Rye.)² Newcastle was a skilful, untiring election manager, prepared to devote his time and to sacrifice his ease to work of a most unpleasant character, and ready to contribute to its expense from his own purse. If his rank and wealth distinguished him among

¹ See, *e.g.*, his paper on elections, December 19, 1767.; Add. MSS. 32987, ff. 341-2.

² This must be treated as merely approximate, but if anything it rather over-states than under-estimates Newcastle's command of seats in 1768. Having quarrelled with his nephews, Lord Lincoln and John Shelley, Newcastle in 1768 had to agree to give up Newark, where, in 1760, he had transferred his estate to Lincoln, whilst at Lewes he lost the candidate who could more particularly be described as his own. Had the local manager at Rye, Thomas Lamb, gone the way of Edward Milward at Hastings, Newcastle would have lost Rye also; and had the Duke of Grafton exerted himself, as Fox or Grenville would have done in his place, Newcastle might possibly have lost even Seaford. On the other hand, he had a certain "contributory" influence in other Sussex boroughs and some boroughs in the counties adjoining Notts and Sussex, though it nowhere amounted to a "command".

borough-mongers, his disinterested, single-minded devotion to tedious and even dirty business no less distinguished him among ministers and dukes. It was this (not ducal grandeur as such) which condemned him to his position.

About Pitt it is often alleged that he was handicapped by lack of borough influence ; but, in truth, he did not care to cultivate it ; and without assiduous application no one could rise to importance in that species of politics. Had Pitt known how to work with other men, the materials for an extensive borough interest were not lacking even in his own family. His elder brother, Thomas, commanded three or four seats : two at Old Sarum, one at Okehampton, and, together with Hawkins, one at Grampound ; his cousins, the Pitts of Strathfieldsaye, usually held two seats in Dorset ; his relatives by marriage, the Grenvilles and Lyttletons, had several in Buckinghamshire and Worcestershire. And when Pitt became the idol of the nation, even strangers offered to accept his nomination to their boroughs. It was Pitt's intractability and the way he had of offending men, including George II, not his being short of Old Sarum, which hampered his career. In fact, borough influence alone counted for less in attaining ministerial office than is usually supposed. Edward Eliot, of Port Eliot, who commanded first four and subsequently six seats in Cornwall, was eleven years in Parliament before, by dint of continuous and insistent solicitation, he managed to obtain from Newcastle a seat at the lowest Board, that of Trade.

Burke is often quoted to prove that high office, in his time, was reserved to the well-born. But his party was nearly always in opposition ; and in 1782, he, who had never held office before, clearly could not have been made First Lord of the Treasury or even Secretary of State, whilst the office he was given, of Paymaster of the Forces, was far from being a small one in the eighteenth century ; Henry Fox had held it at the close of a long and not un-

successful career. But if Burke was in a way looked down upon by his own associates, this was due not so much to the contempt which the "nobly born" felt for his origin, as to the admiration which he had for theirs; for clearly no one can treat as an equal a man so full of respect and veneration.

That in the eighteenth century a rise from a comparatively humble position was not impossible for a man even of merely good average abilities, who was prudent in the choice of party and assiduous in application, is seen by many examples; perhaps best of all in the case of Charles Jenkinson, who commenced his career in no higher position than Burke, and in 1761 thought himself very happy when made a "commis" (Under-Secretary) by Bute; but he gradually rose to Ministerial rank, and died as first Earl of Liverpool. During a debate in the House of Commons on February 7, 1770, "Tommy" Townshend, a Rockingham Whig, remarked to him that his "pompous manner" did not become "a gentleman risen from the situation he has done". Jenkinson replied: "My rise is from as old a family as his own. I have risen by industry, by attention to duty, and by every honourable means I could devise." Whereupon Sir Walter Blackett, an old Tory, interposed: "Every man carries his honour in his own hand. Origin is nothing; it shall never have any weight with me."¹

This was neither a doctrine nor an empty phrase; it expressed a natural and unavoidable concomitant of English gregarious existence. A House, just as a team, has a joint personality, superior to that of the individuals who compose it; and whilst its purpose dominates them, there can be little regarding of men; neither in the scrum nor in argument can his Lordship's pedigree add to his weight. The principle established in France by the Great Revolution and theoretically proclaimed in Germany in 1918—"a fair

¹ Sir H. Cavendish, *Debates of the House of Commons*, vol. i. p. 448.

field to ability"—was realised, without reasoning, in the eighteenth-century British Parliament; and there was no place where men of minor rank and means could exert their personal strength and abilities more freely and to better advantage than in the House of Commons. "The most august of assemblies" was also the fairest of tribunals—which was a cogent reason for men with a good conceit of themselves to wish to bring their case before it; hence the number of those who dreamt of a seat in the House of Commons.

CORONETS: THE SOCIAL CLIMBERS

Social advancement, more easily realised than political ambitions, was, and remains to those who need and desire it, an obvious incentive for entering Parliament. Membership of the governing body necessarily distinguishes the man, certainly in his own circle, and opens doors which would otherwise remain shut against him—it "occasions for him a more enlarged sphere to move in". With what pride did old "Rio" Gulston, a mid-eighteenth-century Brazil merchant, refer to his nephew, Joseph Gulston, M.P., as "*the Member*"! And even the prim, old-spinsterly governess assured Joseph Gulston's daughter that her father "was very rich, a Member of Parliament, and though he was a merchant, a man of great consequence".¹ But only twenty years ago, a small man who had lost his seat in Parliament, complained bitterly to one of his junior leaders that now no one asked him out to dinner. Indeed, the House of Commons has at all times been one of the great uplifting influences in English social life.²

¹ See John Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. pp. 1-60, "The Gulston Family".

² Still, a rarefied atmosphere tests a man's endurance, and a stout heart is required for the period of acclimatisation. Here is the story of a failure described by Elizabeth, daughter of Benjamin Heath, town

In the eighteenth century the House of Commons was, as it is now, a convenient stepping-stone to the House of Lords—though each successive generation thinks that there must have been once a golden age of the Upper House, when there were no beginners and all its members were truly patrician (like the lady who, having seen a new play, remarked that it was not bad, but not good enough for a first night). Then, as now, peerages were given to tired statesmen and ex-Premiers, to Lord Chancellors and Chief Justices, to generals and admirals; owners of Parliamentary boroughs (Lords Falmouth, Edgcumbe, Eliot, etc.) filled the place now taken by owners of the popular press; and scores of Members faithfully served the Government in Parliament and in the constituencies in hope of a peerage, and solicited it with an importunity which cannot be surpassed even now—Irish peerages and baronetcies serving as consolation prizes in these climbing competitions.

In 1755 Lord Chetwynd, M.P. (an Irish peer), when asking the King for a British peerage, wrote, after having mentioned his services in 1745 :

The same zeal, Sir, hath been exerted ever since at a constant and considerable expence in supporting the Government interest throughout the county [of Stafford] in opposition to a disaffected party and in procuring the return of two of my family to sit in the present Parliament, and this, without soliciting Your Majesty's Ministers

clerk of Exeter, in a letter to her brother John, on March 22, 1768 :
 " Mr. Spicer, who was chose . . . for the remainder of the last session [at Exeter, on December 19, 1767], declined standing for the General Election after having taken his seat in the House where, I suppose, he soon found that his consequence was not so great there as he expected, that his money which was his only qualification had not weight enough to command respect from the other members, but that they rather looked down upon him, so that he was not desirous of purchasing a station for a longer time which he did not find himself fitted for . . ."
 (Sir W. R. Drake, *Heathiana* (1882), p. 15).

for any employment or other consideration ; it having been my sole ambition to serve Your Majesty in a manner to deserve the honour I now aspire to. . . .¹

Similarly, Sir John Rushout, M.P., wrote to the Duke of Newcastle on January 24, 1756 :

I have never troubled your Grace for any great, much less, for any lucrative employment . . . for my fortune is sufficient for me, in any station of life, but my whole ambition centers in the hopes of a peerage for my family.²

And Thomas Holmes, M.P., though he had a yearly allowance for managing the three boroughs in the Isle of Wight, thus argued (successfully) his case for at least an Irish peerage :

. . . Were I to communicate to your Grace the estates I have in England, Ireland, and Wales, besides money in the stocks and other securitys, you would see my fortune is equal to those honors ; the anual thing I asked as I have no employment was only to repay me the money I am out of pocket in the several services we support, I never meant it should tie me down from receiving some honorable mark of distinction for having brought a factious part of the country over to His Majesty's interest ; every one knows I have a greater weight in the Island of Wight then any Governor or any other person ever had ; my gratitude for the favours my brothers³ have received from you and your family will oblige me to secure the borroughs for your interest, but shall not chuse to concern my self in any other affairs unless what I have requested is granted, for I think the person that is first in interest and fortune ought not to be the lowest in rank and quality.⁴

In fact, peerages were an essential commodity for satisfying claims from the House of Commons ; so much so that when in 1760, on the eve of the general election,

¹ Add. MSS. 32854, f. 152.

² Add. MSS. 32862, ff. 218-19.

³ General Henry Holmes, M.P. for Yarmouth (Isle of Wight), and Admiral Charles Holmes, M.P. for Newport (I. o. W.).

⁴ Add. MSS. 32906, f. 241.

George II showed himself obdurately German in his "blue blood" prejudices, Newcastle told him that "if His Majesty expected that I should be employed in choosing a new Parliament, I could not do it if I had not the power to oblige the first gentlemen in the countries".¹ It was easier to create peers than to raise money for places and pensions. When in 1755 Newcastle did not know what to do with Legge, he considered making him a peer, and wrote to Holderness: ". . . something *must be done* for him; and how can we get off so cheap any other way?"²

By 1784 the House of Commons was universally regarded as a high road to the House of Lords. The announcement published at the end of the *Fox's Martyrs* of 1784,³ and here reproduced on the next page, well expresses that view. And when in 1790 Sir Gerard Vanneck, a leading London merchant and M.P. for Dunwich, 1768-90, offered himself as candidate for the county of Suffolk, an election squib thus (correctly) gauged his ambitions and future:

For twenty long years I have been independent,
In the Senate a silent and constant attendant,
If to me for such service your votes you accord,
I shall first be your Member, and then be a Lord.⁴

¹ The Duke of Newcastle to Lord Hardwicke, March 4, 1760; Add. MSS. 32903, f. 81. Merchant M.P.'s had as yet to be content with baronetcies, e.g. James Colebrooke, Ellis Cunliffe, Samuel Fludyer, and John Major; and some twenty years later with Irish peerages, e.g. William Mayne, Lord Newhaven, Gerard Vanneck, Lord Huntingfield, John Henniker, Lord Henniker, etc. Smith-Carrington was the first man actually engaged in trade whom George III, with much repugnance, was persuaded to make an English peer. Although George III gloried "in the name of Britain", he still clung to certain German court prejudices.

² Add. MSS. 32857, f. 362.

³ A satirical book commemorating the followers of Charles James Fox who lost their seats in the general election of 1784.

⁴ See K. F. Doughty, *The Betts of Wortham in Suffolk, 1480-1905* (1912), p. 249.

In the Press and speedily will be published,

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO

THOMAS WILLIAM, sometime EARL OF DOVER,¹

And now CANDIDATE for the first Vacancy at the Borough
of KING'S LYNN,

A

C O M P A N I O N

TO THE

EXTINCT PEERAGE OF ENGLAND.

CONTAINING

THE MELANCHOLY HISTORY OF THE MANY

DUKES, MARQUISSES, EARLS, VISCOUNTS, AND BARONS,

Who were cruelly stifled in their Birth

During the late BLOODY PERSECUTIONS.

Quos dulcis vitæ exsortes, et ab ubere raptos
Abtulit atra dies, et funere merfit acerbo¹

VIRG.

Snatched from the Sweets of Life's forthcoming Day,
Behold them cast to gloomy Death a Prey !!!

¹ Undoubtedly meant for Thomas William Coke, of Holkham, who lost his seat for Norfolk; he duly finished as a peer.

“PRIVATE AND PECUNIARY”: PLACEMEN AND
PURVEYORS OF FAVOURS¹

Governor Pitt wrote to his son Robert, the father of Chatham, from Fort St. George on January 16, 1705/6 :

If you are in Parliament, show yourself on all occasions a good Englishman, and a faithful servant to your country. If you aspire to fame in the House, you must make yourself master of its precedents and orders. Avoid faction, and never enter the House pre-possessed ; but attend diligently to the debate, and vote according to your conscience and not for any sinister end whatever. I had rather see any child of mine want than have him get his bread by voting in the House of Commons.²

This was written after a century of Parliamentary contests over causes which had moved the conscience of men and for which they had “died on the scaffold and the field of battle”. Fifty years later the nation was at one in all fundamental matters, and whenever that happy but uninspiring condition is reached, Parliamentary contests lose reality and unavoidably change into a fierce though bloodless struggle for places (only mitigated occasionally by “collusion between the front benches”). In a House dominated by party organisations, such struggles assume the *decorous forms of wholesale transactions*, glorified by the mutual loyalties and the common joys or sorrows of the contending teams. In the eighteenth century the transactions were carried through individually or by small groups, and were therefore as sordid as solitary drinking. Three sets of circumstances tended to aggravate their extent and character. In the first place, the idea that the politically active part of the nation had a claim to

¹ Andrew Mitchell, M.P., Minister to the Court of Prussia, in 1756 marked a letter to Newcastle : “Private and Pecuniary” (Add. MSS. 32865, f. 227). The best part of the correspondence addressed to the Duke by Members of Parliament deserves this heading.

² See *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, *Fortescue MSS.*, vol. i. p. 18.

maintenance on the State was generally accepted, even if it remained sub-conscious;¹ secondly, appointments in the Civil Service and even in the fighting services were made at pleasure and not under competitive regulations, and were therefore exposed to Parliamentary influence and patronage — nepotism and favouritism prevailed,² such as now distinguish this country only in the world of business; thirdly, the majority of seats in the House had a quasi-proprietary character—they were a valuable inheritance or a costly acquisition, from which proper returns were expected. At all times a system of spoils and benefits necessarily obtains in governing representative bodies where sharp contrasts of ideas and interests or strong party organisations do not pre-determine the vote of the individual Member, and do not reduce him to a mere pawn in the Parliamentary game. If personal disinterestedness is expected from independent Members, they have at least to secure benefits and advantages for their constituents; and where the constituents are too numerous to be benefited individually, it becomes a question of a commercial treaty, a tariff or bounty favouring some local industry, of public works in the district, etc. But a system of Parliamentary spoils, when established, tends to grow worse, especially if it affects every stratum of the political pyramid, from the First Minister down to the most insignificant voters. To destroy it, a true political interest is required of sufficient moment to pro-

¹ Cf. pp. 277-8.

² A letter from Lord Sandwich to Lieut. Forth well illustrates the eighteenth-century view of nepotism in official appointments: "... as to Sir William Burnaby's making his son a Captain", he wrote on August 14, 1764, "it was very natural for him to do it; if he is under age, it rests with the Admiralty board to confirm him or not, as they think proper; but I am satisfied in my opinion that no one has a right to complain that he has given his son the preference over every recommendation" (Sandwich MSS. at Hinchinbrooke, *Private Letters*, vol. i. p. 165).

duce mass movements, to divert the energies and attention of men to a real political purpose, and seriously to divide a nation shaken by passions or distress. For Parliament is not like the ghost in Dickens's *Christmas Carol* which appears with a crown of flames round his head and a big extinguisher under his arm; the flames of political passion no longer illuminate the scene when they can be extinguished at pleasure.

With Governor Pitt's exhortation to his son may be contrasted the speech which, half a century later, Edward Gibbon, the historian, put into the mouth of his father, to whom he wrote some time in 1760 :

When I first returned to England . . . you were so good as to give me hopes of a seat in Parliament. This seat, according to the custom of our venal country, was to be bought, and fifteen hundred pounds were mentioned as the price of the purchase. This design flattered my vanity, as it might enable me to shine in so august an assembly. It flattered a nobler passion; I promised myself that by the means of this seat I might be one day the instrument of some good to my country. . . .

Still, he soon perceived that he was not suited to a Parliamentary career, and it was not false modesty, "the meanest species of pride", which made him think so.

But I hear you say *It is not necessary that every man should enter into Parliament with such exalted hopes.* It is to acquire a title the most glorious of any in a free country, and to employ the weight and consideration it gives in the service of one's friends. Such motifs, tho' not glorious, yet are not dishonourable; and if we had a borough in our command, if you could bring me in without any great expence, or if our fortune enabled us to dispise that expence, then indeed I should think them of the greatest strength. . . .¹

¹ *Private Letters of Edward Gibbon (1753-94)*, edited by R. E. Prothero (1896), vol. i. pp. 23-4. When, fourteen years later, Gibbon entered Parliament, he found it "a very agreeable coffee-house" (*ibid.* p. 248), "an agreeable improvement in my life, . . . just the mixture of business, of study, and of society, which I always imagined I should, and now find I do like" (*ibid.* p. 253).

As, however, their fortune was not great, he asked that his allowance should much rather be increased, to enable him to undertake a journey to Italy.

In 1706 it was "faithful service to your country"; in 1760 "service of one's friends". The community had become atomised and individualised, and when another half-century had passed and the idea was proclaimed that the greatest common good is to be reached by every man pursuing his own individual advantage, this was not so much a eulogy of egotism as an apology for an existing practice. In the eighteenth century that practice had required no justification; now an excuse was provided which in time was bound to change into an acid test. However important the part which economic considerations and theories played in the rise of that doctrine, the moral implications must not be overlooked; they go far to explain why this apparent glorification of self-interest came to such a marked extent from the most public-spirited, thoughtful, and moral set of men, the Evangelicals and Dissenters.

In eighteenth-century France the Chevalier des Grieux, whenever he found himself without private means or provision from State or Church, could think of nothing better than card-sharpping, or else his lady-love, Manon Lescaut, had to sell herself to the highest bidder. In Great Britain the range of employment for gentlefolk was much more extensive. Gentlemen went into trade, to the colonies, to India, etc. Still, the choice and possibilities were not what they are now, and even in regard to non-official appointments, political "interest" was serviceable—an Administration in which everything was done by favour had considerable influence, even in business circles. But the most natural thing for "a pretty young man" of gentle birth and small means was to look for provision directly to the State. If the family was sufficiently great or had borough influence, he would be returned to

Parliament and, on the strength of his seat in the House, would seek and obtain some place under the Government—*quelque chose de par le roi*, as it used to be called in pre-Revolutionary France. If his connexions or means were not sufficient for him to start in “his own bottom”, he surely knew some one in Parliament ready to employ his “weight and consideration . . . in the service of his friends”.

Daniel (Finch), second Earl of Nottingham and seventh Earl of Winchilsea, had by his second wife, Anne, daughter of Christopher, first Viscount Hatton, thirty children (the burden on the State was not, however, quite as heavy as on the mother—seven were still-born and ten died young). The fourth son, Henry Finch, educated at Christ's College, Cambridge, became a Fellow of the College, but after ten years at the University, having met with disappointment, had to look out for some other settlement in life. His father seems to have taxed him with idleness, but his eldest brother, Lord Finch, in a letter dated February 11, 1723/4, strongly pleaded his case :

. . . I do desire he may be in the way of fortune in some manner or other, for I cannot agree that because he has no profession he therefore will never be able to live. Lett him be tryed as others have been before him and if he fails he cannot be worse than in the way he is.¹

From a subsequent letter, of which the date is not given, it appears that the question was debated in the family whether Henry should be sent abroad to “learn languages” and “rub off the accademical improvements and habits which in the course of ten years he must have made and contracted”, or whether “a provision out of Parliament” would be “most agreeable to his circumstances”. Ultimately both expedients were adopted: he was sent for some time to The Hague, and on a vacancy occurring in May 1724 at Malton, a pocket borough of his brother-in-law,

¹ P. Finch, *History of Burley-on-the-Hill*, vol. i. pp. 266.

Thomas Watson-Wentworth, Henry Finch was chosen for it; he retained the seat till his death in May 1761. In 1729 he was made Receiver-General of the Revenues of Minorca; in 1743 Surveyor-General of His Majesty's Works (£1000 p.a.), and when, in December 1760, "the sudden and positive order" was given for replacing Henry Finch by Thomas Worsley, a friend of George III and Lord Bute, due regard was paid to him and to his nephew and patron, Lord Rockingham¹—he was given a secret service pension of £900 p.a.² He had, indeed, achieved "a provision out of Parliament".

It seems superfluous to multiply examples of this kind; they will be found in practically every essay in this book. On the higher and more profitable posts or sinecures in the Civil Service, if compatible with a seat in Parliament, its Members had a lien, otherwise their friends. Newcastle's remark with regard to the office of Keeper of the Records in the Tower is characteristic—"All the earth could not make the King give this place out of the House of Commons".³ There were no party funds from which to cover election expenses, and secret service money did not go far in this matter. Offices and sinecures (or contracts in the case of merchants) were therefore used to compensate faithful adherents of Government for their electoral expenses and to reward their services. Thus in 1756 John Frederick, M.P. for West Looe, when applying to Newcastle for office, pleaded "seventeen years implicit obedience to His Majesty's service attended with great expence and

¹ See in the "Register of Correspondence of the Earl of Bute", Add. MSS. 36796, f. 62, the summary of a letter from Count de Viry to Lord Bute, December 23, 1760: "Lord Rockingham will resign on his arrival if Mr. H. Finch is not employed. Recommends a hint to this effect being thrown out to Newcastle or Hardwicke."

² See pp. 269 and 568. As the "land-tax", normally reckoned at 2s. in the £, was not levied on secret service pensions, these £900 were an equivalent for the previous £1000.

³ See p. 310.

attachment to you and your family in every instance".¹ Similarly Hardwicke, when urging the claim of his wife's nephew, Charles Cocks, M.P. for Reigate, to some office, wrote on November 14, 1757: "He has now been in Parliament ten or eleven years, and allways behav'd there very diligently and very steadily, notwithstanding temptations to the contrary".² And when Philip Stanhope was returned to Parliament on April 17, 1754, Lord Chesterfield, writing to Newcastle on April 29, plumed himself on his moderation in not asking anything for him: "I am not fashionable enough to ask for a place for him to-morrow because he came into Parliament yesterday, but should he deserve your Grace's favour I am sure you will show it him at a proper time. . . ."³

Lastly, the various Commissionerships of Customs, Taxes, Excise, and Stamps, most of them worth £1000 p.a., offered a suitable retreat for Members who for some reason or other had, or wished, to leave Parliament—for men broken in health or disappointed in their bolder hopes and ambitions. Thus Chief Justice Willes, finding that the health of his eldest son "will not permit him to attend the House of Commons as he ought", asked that he be made Commissioner of Customs.⁴ No seat being available for John Frederick in 1761, he was given one of those Commissionerships.⁵ When, early in 1765, Henry Grenville, M.P. for Thirsk, returned from his Embassy to Constantinople, he too was given a Commissionership of Customs, "which, as it would oblige him to vacate his seat in Parliament, would exempt him from involving himself in the unhappy differences in his own family".⁶

¹ March 31, 1756; Add. MSS. 32864, f. 113.

² Add. MSS. 32875, f. 501.

³ Add. MSS. 32735, f. 207.

⁴ Willes to Newcastle, March 23, 1758; Add. MSS. 32878, f. 316.

⁵ See pp. 404-7.

⁶ George Grenville's "Diary", *Grenville Papers*, vol. iii. p. 117.

Again it seems superfluous to multiply examples of which many more will be found in the other essays in these two volumes. So much only be said, that from a seat in Parliament one could always move to the easy-chair of some place or sinecure, snug and genteel, "and not unworthy any gentleman's acceptance though incompatible with a seat in Parliament".

There were, however, also Members—and a fair number of them—"in such a way in the world as to have little or no occasion to trouble" Ministers "with demands".¹ But then they had relatives, friends, or constituents, whose claims they had to urge. Here is a letter to Newcastle, dated July 19, 1765, from one of the most upright and independent Whig Members, James Hewitt, M.P. for Coventry, 1761-66 (and subsequently Justice of the King's Bench and Lord Chancellor of Ireland):

Serjeant Hewitt who has nothing to ask of Government for himself and who has never received any beneficial mark of public favour, begs leave to recommend his brother, Mr. William Hewitt, for something at home or abroad which may carry some publick mark of respect to the serjeant and therein do him credit. . . .²

Here, again, is the description given in Bute's list of the House of Commons of 1761, of Thomas Sergison, M.P. for Lewes, a small man who, after having unsuccessfully contested the seat as an Opposition candidate in 1734 and 1741, took Newcastle's "livery" in 1747, and from then onwards represented the borough till his death in 1766: ³

¹ This phrase is used about himself by James Duff (subsequently second Lord Fife) in a letter to Newcastle, November 6, 1754; Add. MSS. 32737, ff. 292-3.

² Add. MSS. 32972, f. 300.

³ Thomas Sergison was the son of Thomas Warden of Cuckfield, Sussex, by Prudence, niece of Charles Sergison, M.P., Commissioner of the Navy; on succeeding to his estate, Thomas Warden, jun., took the name of Sergison. About Charles Sergison, see *D.N.B.*; about Thomas Sergison and his family, *Transactions of the Sussex Archaeological Society*, vol. xiv. p. 266, and vol. xxv. p. 84.

Has two brothers, one in the Navy receiving pay but not serving, the other quartered upon Mr. Shelley, Auditor for South Wales, half the salary, and likewise two sons in law, one of them, Charles Langford, had a private pension till lately, the other is Mr. Tomlinson, Member for Steyning.¹

There had been no need for Newcastle to buy the vote of Sergison, who depended on the Duke for his seat. But it would have been contrary to the decencies of eighteenth-century politics if the Duke had failed to exercise his power and patronage in favour of the relatives of a faithful follower. As a matter of fact, Sergison remained with Newcastle even when that came to entail the loss of Court favour.

To what an extent providing for the families of Members out of the "King's money" had become the custom, can be seen in a letter addressed to Newcastle by Mr. Bayntun Rolt, M.P. for Chippenham, to whose election both in 1747 and 1754 the Treasury had contributed £800, and who naturally expected another such contribution in 1761; who, in short, was not sufficiently independent to bargain for favours. Still, having a sister who had remained a widow without suitable provision, he asked Newcastle to give her a pension of £300 per annum; and when the matter was delayed, as was Newcastle's habit, Bayntun Rolt wrote to him on August 13, 1760:

I have too many obligations to your Grace to presume to take offence; yet allow me to complain and remind you, that my poor sister Prideaux has continued above a year, in the most miserable situation. As your Grace's sincere friend and humble politician, I

¹ Add. MSS. 38333, f. 100. The list was drawn up about December 20, 1761, but this marginal remark was obviously added some time after Newcastle's resignation, for Langford continued in receipt of the secret service pension so long as Newcastle was in office. The list seems to have remained with Charles Jenkinson, and was used till November 1763.

have a sort of right to press this matter upon you and flatter myself you will excuse me. . . .¹

Indeed, so universal was the plaguing of Ministers on behalf of friends and relations that in 1760 a tender mother who wished to see her son in Parliament thought it useful to point out to Newcastle that her son would have no such requests to make :

Mrs. Boothby Skrymsher's compliments attend upon the Duke of Newcastle.

She understands the Duke of Rutland has done her son, Mr. Charles Boothby Skrymsher, of Tooty Park in the county of Leicester, the honor to mention him to his Grace as a person desirous at his own expence

to come into the next parliament under the guidance and protection of the Duke of Newcastle.

Mr. Boothby Skrymsher is of age and returns from his travels next autumn, by principals and education is zealously attached to His Majesty's Person and Administration, as is well known to the Duke of Rutland and Lord Granby.

Mrs. Boothby Skrymsher can with strict truth assure the Duke of Newcastle that her son has no relations to solicit favors for, or any veiw, further than an opinion that parliamentary business is a proper employment for the mind of a young man at his first entrance into life.

His Grace, the Duke of Newcastle may depend upon his integrity, and that he will obey his commands, and with true gratitude, acknowledge the great obligation conferred upon him who will certainly prove a faithful humble servant to his Grace.²

¹ Add. MSS. 32910, f. 11. It should, however, be added that Elizabeth Prideaux was the widow of a Brigadier-General killed at Niagara, on July 19, 1759 (see Maclean, *History of the Deanery of Trigg Minor* (1876), vol. ii. p. 232).

² Add. MSS. 32902, f. 141; the letter is undated, but seems to have been written in February 1760.

Charles Boothby Skrymsher failed to obtain a seat in 1761; came forward as candidate for Leicestershire in March 1762, but withdrew from the contest (see Add. MSS. 32935 and 32936), and committed suicide in 1800, without ever having improved his mind in Parliament. Later in life his ambitions were social, and not political. The obituary

PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT: THE SERVICES AND
THE LAW

The Soldiers.—On February 3, 1741, Lord Chesterfield, speaking in the House of Lords against a proposed increase of the army, descanted on the dangers that would arise from the larger number of commissions which—as was said in the protest subsequently entered by him and others in the Journals of the House—"may be disposed of with regard to Parliamentary influence only"¹: "What numbers [of officers]", he exclaimed, "are there in the other House! and how have they increased within few years! For it is the known way to military preferment. . . ."²

I am not in a position to state how many army officers sat in the House of Commons at that time. An analysis of the Parliament of 1754, preserved in the Hardwicke

note in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1800, vol. ii. p. 800) states that he was "a very respectable gentleman and . . . in the habits of intimacy with the first noblemen in this country". "Mr. Boothby was the person supposed to be alluded to by Foote in one of his farces, as distinguished by his partiality to people of rank, and inclined to leave one acquaintance to walk with another of superior dignity. Hence arose his denomination of *Prince Boothby*."

His mother, Anne, daughter of Sir Hugh Clopton, Bart., and a cousin of Horace Walpole's mother, is described by him as "not . . . the most amiable person in the world" (see letter to Horace Mann, April 10, 1761). Her letters to Charles Jenkinson justify the description; she herself seems to have been aware of the terror she inspired. On July 19, 1761, she thus prefaced a letter asking him to procure for her tickets for the Coronation: "Be not terrified, dear jenkey, with the sight of so sudden an answer to your obliging letter . . ." (Add. MSS. 38197, f. 220). And again on October 23, 1762: "Dear jenkey, do not be dismayd at the sight of a letter from me and fancy I want to ask you questions touching State affairs, no, wec country country [*sic*] gentry have not that wicked curiosity . . ." (Add. MSS. 38200, ff. 56-7).

¹ *Journals of the House of Lords*, vol. xxv. p. 586.

² Secker MS., Add. MSS. 6043, f. 62.

Papers,¹ puts their number at fifty, including them all among those who were "for" the Government; whilst at the general election of 1761, sixty-four army officers,

¹ Add. MSS. 35876, f. 1. The paper bears no date, but a pencil mark on the MS., apparently made when these papers were arranged at the British Museum, suggests for it the date of January 1739/40, and Mr. A. S. Turberville, in his book on *The House of Lords in the Eighteenth Century* (p. 482) refers to it as a "contemporary analysis of the composition of the Commons' Chamber in 1740", which would make it the very same of which Chesterfield spoke on February 3, 1741. Unfortunately these suggestions are devoid of all foundation. The outstanding features of the analysis whereby it can be dated are these:

(1) It puts the number of Members for the Government at 366, against it at 152, and the doubtful at 34; i.e. it gives the Government a majority of 214.

(2) It states that four Members were chosen simultaneously for two places, five were dead, and for six seats there were double returns.

To stand simultaneously for two places was a method of hedging used at general elections by those who, whilst contesting doubtful seats, were able to re-insure by having themselves at the same time returned for pocket boroughs. But obviously in 1740, six years after the general election, four men could not have been returned for eight seats at by-elections. It is clear that this is the analysis of a newly elected Parliament.

It cannot, however, refer to the Parliament elected in April and May 1741, in which Walpole seemed at first to have a small majority, and soon found himself in a minority. A "computation" of that House in the same volume of the Hardwicke Papers (Add. MSS. 35876, ff. 138-9) puts the number "for the Court" at 284, "against" at 270, which yields a majority of 14, and not of 214. Moreover, it speaks of only "4 double returns", whereas in the analysis six are mentioned; lastly, an inspection of the returns shows that at the general election of 1741, ten and not four men were returned simultaneously for two seats.

But all the statements in the analysis fit the House of Commons elected in 1754. Newcastle wrote in his "Memorandums for the King", on May 20, 1754 (Add. MSS. 32735, f. 298): "Majority in Parliament 213—doubtful 37. . . ." These figures are so near to 214 and 34 that they can be treated as identical. The four men chosen simultaneously for two places in 1754 were: W. Beckford (London and

actually in the service, were elected,¹ including the best known generals of the time—Field-Marshal Lord Ligonier,² Lord Granby, Sir John Mordaunt, H. S. Conway, Robert Clive, and George Townshend; and some who were soon to acquire prominence—John Burgoyne, William Howe, Charles Cornwallis, etc. One only among the sixty-four whom I place on the “army-list” sat for a Government borough,³ whilst every one belonged to a family of social standing, and almost half were sons of peers. None the

Petersfield), R. Nugent (Bristol and St. Mawes), C. F. Scudamore (Hereford and Thetford), and L. Watson (Kent and Boroughbridge). Four names were given in the returns for Oxfordshire and Wareham, and three at Salisbury and Bury St. Edmunds; which makes six “double returns”. As for the five dead, four died within a month of their elections (V. Knightley, J. French, R. Herbert, and Sir John Strange), and one wonders whether it was the strain and excitement which accounted for this exceedingly high mortality. The fifth (J. Halliday) died on June 3. As another seat was vacated on September 3, by George Compton succeeding to the earldom of Northampton, and this is not mentioned in the analysis, we are enabled to fix the date of the paper at the summer of 1754.

¹ In this calculation I do not include officers who had sold out, *e.g.* Robert Fairfax, Cecil Forester, etc., or a man like Lord George Sackville, who had been dismissed from the Service, or men who had served in their youth or in times of emergency but were no longer in the army (*e.g.* Sir James Carnegie, Bart., who had served at Fontenoy and Culloden, or Edwin Lascelles, who had fought at Minden); but only professional soldiers, actually in the Service.

² It seems, in fact, to have been considered necessary for the Commander-in-Chief to be in Parliament. This at least appears to have been Pitt's view. On December 1, 1757, he protested to Newcastle against Ligonier being given only an Irish peerage:

... indeed, my Lord, it shou'd have been, on all accounts, an English peerage, and I trust this will be only a leading step to that proper and almost necessary dignity . . . his age and value to the Kingdom ought to put him instantly in a situation, that would exempt him from the drudgery of a House of Commons . . . (Add. MSS. 32876, ff. 197-8).

³ Henry Holmes, M.P. for Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight, where his brother, Lord Holmes, was the manager of the Government interest.

less, it was taken for granted that their professional interests counted with them for a good deal, and whilst the Duke of Cumberland was at the head of the army, Newcastle, at that time no friend of his, "did not seem . . . to approve of choosing military men [to Parliament]".¹ But when Fox was Secretary of State in Newcastle's Administration, the Duke of Cumberland, his patron, acted as "whip" for the officers in the House. "I spoke to *the* Duke this morning", wrote Fox to Newcastle on March 20, 1756, "who most cordially assur'd me that he would have ev'ry officer apply'd to that he could";² and two days later: ". . . the officers attended very well".³ Again, when in March and April 1759 the Government to be formed on the death of George II was discussed by Leicester House, Count de Viry reported to Newcastle that the Prince of Wales had declared he would always show due regard to the Duke of Cumberland, but

the Duke was not to expect to have any share in affairs. To which I ask'd, whether that related to the army—my friend seem'd to think, it did; as the army would give great power in the House of Commons.⁴

In November 1745, Pitt, when invited by Pelham to join the Government, named among his conditions "the extension of the Place-Bill, to exclude from seats in Parliament all officers of the Army under the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and of the Navy, under that of captain"⁵; and Chesterfield, consulted by Newcastle concerning Pitt's conditions, replied that he thought this point "a good one" because of "the great advantage that will result from it, both to fleet and army, by hindering young

¹ Add. MSS. 32884, ff. 397-8.

² Add. MSS. 32863, f. 398.

³ *Ibid.* f. 437.

⁴ Memorandum of April 3, 1759; Add. MSS. 32889, ff. 348-9.

⁵ See letter from the Duke of Newcastle to Lord Chesterfield, November 20, 1745; Add. MSS. 32705, ff. 319-20.

subaltern puppys from forcing themselves by their seats in Parliament, into higher posts, than they are . . . fitt for".¹ But, in fact, their exclusion would not have made much difference—colonels were no less keen on promotion, and naturally could, as a rule, point to a longer Parliamentary service in support of their claims. Major-General Lord John Murray, fifteen years after having obtained the rank which under the regulations suggested by Pitt would have admitted him to the House, when asking Newcastle for promotion in the service, emphasised that he had "constantly given his attendance every session of Parliament for these nineteen years" except when ordered to Ireland.² When in 1754, William A'Court, M.P., Lieutenant-Colonel in the Coldstream Guards, asked to be made a colonel, he pleaded his twenty-eight years in the service and nine years as lieutenant-colonel, and concluded his Memorial by pointing out that "his family and himself have ever been steady supporters of His Majesty's interest in Parliament. . . ." ³ And when Lord Howe was killed at Ticonderoga, and Lord Gage, M.P., asked that Howe's regiment be given to his brother, Thomas Gage,⁴ Newcastle wrote to him:

. . . I will do my best for Gage if my nephew George Townshend cannot have it. But as he is so much an older officer than your brother, and may be of great consequence in the House of Commons, I am persuaded that neither your Lordship nor Gage himself can disapprove of George Townshend's having it. . . .⁵

¹ See letter from the Duke of Newcastle to Lord Chesterfield, November 20, 1745; Add. MSS. 32705, f. 381.

² June 23, 1753; Add. MSS. 32732, ff. 93-5.

³ Add. MSS. 32736, ff. 55-6; see also his application for another promotion, March 5, 1759—"if you think near 33 years unexceptionable service as an officer, and my family Parliamentary connections with your Grace ever since you have been in Administration gives me any title to it" (Add. MSS. 32888, f. 344).

⁴ August 23, 1758; Add. MSS. 32883, f. 64.

⁵ August 27; *ibid.* f. 131.

Lord Gage replied :

Without entering into a discussion on Mr. Townshend's right to a regiment as an officer ; I think as a Member of Parliament, his abilities and connections give him a claim to favour.¹

John Calcraft, the army agent, had a younger brother, Thomas, a captain in the army, and was a close friend of Colonel Sandford, a cousin of Lord Kildare. On November 1, 1760, in view of the approaching general election, he wrote to Kildare about Sandford :

. . . In the present critical juncture I want to know whether in case an opportunity cou'd he found he wou'd choose to be at the expence of coming into the English Parliament ; I wanted also to ask, whether, as my brother is likely to continue on the Irish establishment, it might not be desirable for him to get into that Parliament and if he cou'd put him in the way.²

Clearly in the choice of Parliament, the regiment and its establishment had to be considered.

Of the " two golden rules " which governed the services, " interest and seniority," the former was infinitely the more important, and men who had no one in Parliament to back their most equitable " pretensions " were apt to share the fate of the officer in *Tom Jones*³ who, having for distinguished service been made a lieutenant by Marlborough, continued as such for the next forty years, one reason of " this ill-success in his profession " being that he had " no friends among the men in power ".⁴ " What

¹ August 29 ; *ibid.* f. 164.

² Calcraft's Letterbook, Add. MSS. 17495, f. 166. Calcraft, who in 1761 acted as regimental agent for no less than 49 colonels (see *The Court and City Kalendar . . . for the year 1761*), and until April 1763 was closely connected with Henry Fox, was a frequent channel for political correspondence with army-Members, as is shown by his Letterbooks.

³ Book vii. chapter xii.

⁴ See, e.g., Barré's letter to Pitt, written from New York on April 28, 1760, *Chatham Correspondence*, vol. ii. pp. 41-3. " For want of friends,

interest has he ? ” was the foremost question in the eighteenth century.

*If you talk to . . . an old stager, either by sea or land, and mention a young fellow who has given proofs of his ability or genius, and being fit for such and such a command, he will tell you, it is impossible he should have it. . . . You may as well talk of making me Great Mogul of the Tartars. . . . In the first place, he has no interest ; and in the next place, he has no standing in the Service to pretend to such a command. . . .*¹

The one saving circumstance for the army was that the Hanoverian dynasty, though it adjusted itself to English political conditions, none the less retained a strong German predilection for the parade-ground, which it would not unreservedly sacrifice to the Parliamentary arena. It was a standing grief with the Duke of Newcastle that army patronage was withheld from him, even after the Duke of Cumberland had fallen into disgrace because of Closterseven ; for henceforth appointments were made by George II himself, on recommendations from Lord Ligonier.² Similarly George III as a rule refused to subordinate the essential interests of the army to vote-catching in the House of Commons.

The Sailors.—In 1753 Henry Pelham, when asking Captain Trelawny, R.N., to defer standing for Parliament, as it would have interfered with some of his arrangements, promised Trelawny to take care in the meantime that by doing so he lost no ground in his profession.³ No attempt was made to disguise very obvious connexions.

“ Most of our flag officers are in the House of

I had lingered a subaltern officer eleven years, when Mr. Wolfe’s opinion of me rescued me from that obscurity.” But now Wolfe was dead—“ By the neglect I have since met with, I am apprehensive that my pretensions are to be buried with my only protector and friend.”

¹ *The London Chronicle*, January 12–15, 1760.

² See pp. 314–15.

³ See p. 402.

Commons, . . . " ¹ said the Duke of Argyle in a speech, on February 3, 1741. The statement seems amply justified; take, *e.g.*, the list of admirals as it appears in the *Court and City Kalendar* for 1761—I add their constituencies and the years of their service in Parliament :

Admirals of the White

George Clinton, M.P. for Saltash, 1754–61 (died July 10, 1761).

Sir William Rowley, M.P. for Taunton, 1750–54, and Portsmouth, 1754–61.

Isaac Townsend, M.P. for Rochester, 1757–65.

Lord Anson, M.P. for Hedon, 1744–47 (when made a peer).

Admirals of the Blue

Henry Osborn, M.P. for Beds., 1758–61.

Thomas Smith.²

Thomas Griffin, M.P. for Arundel, 1754–61.

Sir Edward Hawke, M.P. for Portsmouth, 1747–76.

Charles Knowles, M.P. for Gatton, 1749–52.

John Forbes (in the Irish Parliament, 1751–63, but declined a seat at Westminster).³

Edward Boscawen, M.P. for Truro, 1742–61 (died January 10, 1761).

Vice-Admirals of the Red

George Pococke, M.P. for Plymouth, 1760–68.

¹ Secker MS., Add. MSS. 6043, f. 67.

² The King intended to have him returned for Rochester *vice* Byng (see Add. MSS. 32870, ff. 285 and 297), but finally Admiral Isaac Townsend was elected and Thomas Smith never entered Parliament.

³ He consented to enter the Irish Parliament, "the first time to preserve peace in the county; and the second, to support family interest; for he was ever disinclined to be in Parliament, and therefore made it a condition, when he accepted a place at the Admiralty Board, which for some time he declined, that he should not be brought into the British Parliament"; see J. Forbes, *Memoirs of the Earls of Granard* (1868), p. 175.

George Townshend.¹

Francis Holburne, M.P. for Stirling Burghs, 1761-68, and Plymouth, 1768-71.

Vice-Admirals of the White

Thomas Cotes, M.P. for Great Bedwin, 1761-67.

Sir Thomas Frankland, M.P. for Thirsk, 1747-80 and in 1784.

Lord Harry Powlett, M.P. for Lymington, 1755-61, and for Winchester, 1761-65.

Harry Norris.²

Vice-Admirals of the Blue

Thomas Broderick.

Sir Charles Hardy, M.P. for Rochester, 1764-68, and for Plymouth, 1771-80.

The Earl of Northesk (a Scottish peer).

Sir Charles Saunders, M.P. for Hedon, 1754-75.

Rear-Admirals of the Red

Thomas Pye, M.P. for Rochester, 1771-74.

Charles Stevens (died May 17, 1761).

Philip Durell.

Rear-Admirals of the White

Charles Holmes, M.P. for Newport, 1758-62.

Samuel Cornish, M.P. for Shoreham, 1765-70.

Francis Geary (stood for Rochester in 1768, but was defeated).

Rear-Admirals of the Blue

Smith Callis.

G. B. Rodney, M.P. for various constituencies, 1751-54, 1759-74, and 1780-82.

¹ A half-brother of the third Viscount Townshend. It seems incomprehensible how as a Townshend and an admiral he escaped Parliament; but he did.

² His father, Admiral Sir John Norris, sat for Rye, 1708-21 and 1734-49; his brothers John and Matthew, 1727-33 and 1733-34; his nephew John Norris, 1762-74.

Thus of these thirty officers, twenty at one time or another sat in Parliament, whilst one was a Scottish peer.

Or again, take the Council of War held on board H.M.S. *Neptune* off the Isle of Aix, on September 25, 1757. There were present :

Admiral Sir Edward Hawke, M.P. for Portsmouth, 1747-76.

General Sir John Mordaunt, M.P. for various constituencies, 1730-34, and 1735-68.

Vice-Admiral Charles Knowles, M.P. for Gatton, 1749-52.

Major-General H. S. Conway, M.P. for various constituencies, 1741-82.

Rear-Admiral Thomas Broderick.

Major-General Edward Cornwallis, M.P. for Westminster, 1753-62.

Captain G. B. Rodney, M.P. for various constituencies, 1751-54, 1759-74, and 1780-82.

Colonel George Howard, M.P. for Lostwithiel, 1761-66, and for Stamford, 1768-96.

Thus seven out of eight members of that Council at various times sat in Parliament, and four were actually Members on that day !

Of the famous naval commanders of the Seven Years' War and the American Revolution practically every one sat in Parliament : Anson,¹ the unfortunate Byng, Boscawen, Pococke, Saunders, Hawke, Hardy, Rodney, Howe, Keppel, Palliser, Cornwallis, Alexander and Samuel Hood, Jervis, and Elphinstone, besides such as Rowley, Townsend, Cornish, Pigot, Mulgrave, Shuldham, etc., who held important commands but did not reach the first rank of fame. Seats in the Admiralty boroughs were among the prizes due for distinguished service in the profession : " I hope my rank and long services will entitle [me] to

¹ Also at least five of the officers who had gone with him round the world—Sir Charles Saunders, A. Keppel, Sir Piercy Brett, Peter Denis, and M. Michell ; a sixth, E. Legge, was returned for Portsmouth in 1747, but unseated on petition.

an Admiralty borough", wrote Rodney in 1780.¹ Of twenty-one naval officers returned in 1761, nine sat on the Government interest,² and fourteen received Newcastle's "circular letter" requesting their attendance at the opening of the session—to nine of them it was significantly sent through Anson, the First Lord of the Admiralty;³ of the seven who did not receive the letter, five were away on active service—some naval Members of the House were absent for years—and two were Scotchmen who had to be left to Bute (but had both been on the list of candidates fixed by Newcastle and the Duke of Argyle in June 1760).⁴

The close connexion between the Navy and Parliament raised naval debates in the House to a remarkable level, but when party feeling ran high, introduced political dissensions into the Service. In 1782 Lord Rodney declared

that so violent was the spirit of party and faction in his own fleet, as almost to supersede and extinguish . . . every patriotic sentiment in the bosoms of many individuals serving under him. . . . There were . . . officers of high rank and of unquestionable courage, who nevertheless bore so inveterate an animosity to the Administration then existing, particularly to the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Earl of Sandwich, as almost to wish for a defeat if it would produce the dismissal of Ministers.⁵

¹ August 2, 1780; *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Ninth Report, iii. pp. 102-103, *Stopford Sackville MSS.*

² Sir Piercy Brett at Queensborough, Sir Edward Hawke at Portsmouth, Charles Holmes at Newport, Sir George Pococke at Plymouth, Sir Charles Saunders at Hedon, and Isaac Townsend at Rochester. Peter Denis's tenure of a seat at Hedon, Lord Howe's at Dartmouth, and G. B. Rodney's at Penryn, were not quite in the same category as those of the senior admirals, personal elements entering into the selection; still, even their tenure was of a "Service" character.

³ Add. MSS. 32929, ff. 303-11.

⁴ Add. MSS. 32999, ff. 15-17.

⁵ Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, *Historical and Posthumous Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 324.

To these men the House of Commons offered a tribune from which to vent their griefs, political and professional, against their chiefs or colleagues. When on February 7, 1782, Sheridan in the House of Commons attacked Lord North's Government for having driven the most distinguished naval commanders from the Service, he remarked that

there were several of these officers . . . present in the House, and he hoped they would now rise . . . and explain fully and clearly, the reasons which they had for withdrawing. . . . Admiral Pigot, after some pause, evidently intended for Lord Howe, rose, and stated in a manly and clear manner the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty towards him.¹

It is difficult to say exactly for how much political interest counted in naval appointments, but, on the whole, it would seem that it was not more than a contributory element, important but not decisive; after all, the Government, the Admiralty, and individual commanders stood to lose more by wrong appointments than any political advantage could compensate, and probably political interest, like noble birth, helped more at the start and in the lower grades than in reaching the top rungs of the ladder. From its very nature, the Navy was a comparatively democratic Service.

A man like Anson tried hard to restrict political interference in the Service—"he withstood recommendations of interest or favor more than any First Lord of the Admiralty was ever known to do", wrote in 1771 Philip, 2nd Earl of Hardwicke.² But he had to battle therein both with Newcastle and with his own commanders, who, if Members of Parliament or candidates for it, frequently let themselves be guided by election interests in their

¹ See *The Parliamentary Register*, February 7, 1782, vol. 22, p. 419.

² "Memorial of Family Occurrences from 1760 to 1770 inclusive"; Add. MSS. 35428, f. 4.

recommendations.¹ The following correspondence between Newcastle and Anson seems worth recording : ²

*The Duke of Newcastle to Lord Anson, June 15, 1759.*³

My dear Lord,

I beg your Lordship would attend seriously to this letter.

The interest of the borough of Oakhampton (where Mr. Potter is now chose) absolutely depends upon it. The King expects that I should keep up his interest in boroughs : I can't do it without I have the assistance of the several branches of the Government.

Lieutenant Hunt (whom I formerly recommended to your Lordship,) is so strongly insisted upon by the Corporation is lost and with it one, or perhaps two Members.

I state the case as it is. . . .

*Lord Anson to the Duke of Newcastle, Admiralty, June 15, 1759.*⁴

My Lord Duke,

I had the honour of your Grace's letter this morning, and always do attend seriously to whatever your Grace recommends to me, and shall whenever the borough of Ockingham becomes vacant by the death of Mr. Potter (and I hope you will not wish it sooner) promote Mr. Hunt to a command.—I must now beg your Grace will seriously consider what must be the condition of your Fleet if these borough recommendations, which must be frequent are to be complied with ; I wish it did not at this instant bring to my mind the misery poor Porcock that excellent officer suffer'd from the misbehaviour of captains of that cast, which has done more mischief to the publick (which I know is the most favorite point with you) than the loss of a vote in the House of Commons. My constant method since I have had the honour of serving the King in the station I am in, has been to promote the Lieutenants to command, whose ships have been successfully engaged upon equal terms with the

¹ See, e.g., pp. 156, 390, and 396.

² It has been previously published in W. V. Anson's *Life of Admiral Lord Anson* (1912), pp. 114-16. The text of the letters as reproduced above differs in a few details from that given by Captain Anson, but follows exactly the MSS. in the Newcastle Papers.

³ Add. MSS. 32892, f. 94.

⁴ *Ibid.* f. 96.

enemy, without having any friend or recommendation; and in preference to all others, and this I would recommend to my successors if they would have a Fleet to depend on.¹

Naval history is a vast subject which requires highly specialised knowledge, and I can do no more than call attention to the close connexion which in the eighteenth century existed between the Navy and the House of Commons. I conclude with an illustration, for which I choose the case of a worthy, good naval officer who did much hard work and honest service in his life, but in whose career political influence proved, to say the least, opportune.

Paul Henry Ourry was the son of Huguenot refugees settled in the Channel Islands; his father, naturalised in 1713, had held a commission in the British Army since 1707; his eldest brother, Lewis, was also an army officer; another brother, Isaac, was in the service of the East India Company; a third, George, like Paul Henry, in the Royal Navy.² Made a lieutenant in 1742, Paul Henry Ourry subsequently served under George Edgcumbe, with whom he was still in the encounter off Mahon, on May 20,

¹ About "Joe" Hunt, see also p. 156. In fairness to Hunt, it should, however, be noted that he appears to have been a good and gallant officer—ever such had to resort to "protection" when everybody was doing it. Having been made a commander on June 18, 1759 (three days after the above correspondence), and a captain on November 21, 1760 (on the eve of the general election), Hunt was killed in a successful engagement off the Penmarks, on January 11, 1761; "... while the surgeon, and his attendants were busily employed in attending, and endeavouring to succour him, one of the seamen, less dangerously wounded than himself, was brought down also, he immediately forbade all farther attention being paid him, saying that he feared his own case was a desperate one, and positively insisted they should proceed to take proper care of the man" (see Charnock, *Biographia Navalis*, vol. vi. p. 400).

² About the Ourry family, see *Miscell. Geneal. et Herald.*, third series, vol. v. pp. 12-16.

1756, when Byng withdrew before the French fleet. In 1749 Ourry married Charity, daughter of George Treby, M.P.,¹ whose family had electoral influence at Plympton in Devonshire; the chief interest in that borough was, however, with the Edgcumbes, who, like the Boscauens, blended Parliamentary interests and naval service into one harmonious whole. Plympton formed henceforth an interesting link between P. H. Ourry and his commanding officer, Commodore George Edgcumbe.

On March 24, 1754, Isaac Ourry wrote to his brother Lewis about the cordial reception he had from Lord Edgcumbe and his brother, the Commodore, and the general promises they gave him "of serving the family in anything in their power":

They are very full of business at present to carry some necessary point to strengthen their interest in regard to some boroughs in disputes since the last election [primarily St. Michael in Cornwall] and to obtain some favours and places for their family and borough friends, after which I am very well persuaded they will have a regard to yours when any thing offers they can serve you in. . . . Just after an election representatives have many friends to return obligations to, which must have the preference to any other person. . . .²

And again from Spithead on April 7, 1755:

The contested election of St. Michell is determin'd in favour of the persons they had put up, they are now on the scent to gett a better place for the Sq. and the Comd. [Commodore Edgcumbe] continu'd in his command with a stronger squadron if possible; that and others of the like nature to strengthen their interest in the Government takes up their attention; it would be a pity to trouble them at such time, once they have succeeded they will be better

¹ About the Treby family, see William Cotton, *Some Account of the Ancient Borough Town of Plympton St. Maurice, or Plympton Earl* (1859).

² Add. MSS. 21643, f. 3. A collection of family correspondence of the Ourrys is preserved in that volume of the Haldimand Papers.

able to serve their friends, hut their dependants and such as they have obligations to, must be consider'd first. . . .¹

Paul Henry Ourry had by now spent three years in the Mediterranean, whilst his wife looked after his professional and political interests; she wrote to Major Lewis Ourry, on June 6, 1755:

The death of one of the aldermen at Plympton gives the Edg-cumbes an opportunity of showing their intentions of serveing Mr. Ourry, if they do not chuse him, I shall be convinced they are not his friends. My brothers' interest Mr. Ourry is sure of; hut they have only two voices, I am not a little anxious on this head, nothing like interest in a horough, it carrys every thing; dont mention this to any one, for should Mr. Ourry not succeed I should not care to have it known that we aplyed for it. . . .

I am very bussy hay making, my farming goes on well, the first field of grass cut in the parish, my little girl and myself have had colds but are better. . . .²

In 1758 Ourry served in the expedition against Cherbourg, in 1761 against Belleisle, in 1762 against Martinique. In 1763 the family of Treby became extinct in the male line, Charity's two brothers, who successively represented Plympton, having died unmarried, and Captain Ourry was now a candidate to their political inheritance and also to promotion in his profession. Lord Sandwich, at that time Secretary of State, on September 20, 1763, wrote to his friend Captain Hervey, R.N.:

I am very glad to hear you give so good an account of Captain Ourry's political disposition, in consequence of which if he will apply to Lord Egmont for a guardship at Plymouth I am well assured he will meet with success, and have one of the first ships that is commissioned. . . . You may likewise inform Captain Ourry that his friendly language has saved him from another inconvenience, as there was a candidate ready for Plympton, who will now be stopped. . . .³

¹ Add. MSS. 21643, f. 28.

² *Ibid.* ff. 34-5.

³ Sandwich MSS.

Ourry very soon got a guardship at Portsmouth¹ and represented Plympton, 1763-75, when he was made Commissioner of the Dockyard at Portsmouth, a place which could not be held with a seat in Parliament.

The Civil Servants.—It was but very slowly that the Civil Service acquired its present corporate structure, independence, and aloofness. About 1760 the "commis" in the office of the Secretaries of State (who would now be Permanent Under-Secretaries) and the Secretaries to various Government departments were personal dependants of the Ministers, but at the same time frequently Members of Parliament. Both the dignity and inferiority of the chaplain or curate at a big country house attached to their persons and position—they had to know a great deal and not expect too much, to be qualified to sit at the table of their chief and, in most cases, be satisfied with the lowest places at it. The question in how far their allegiance was due to the person and how far to the office of the Minister was not solved as yet, and gave rise to conflicting loyalties and to bitter resentments. When in July 1765 the *Grenville Administration* was replaced by that of Rockingham, Edward Sedgwick, Under-Secretary in the Southern Department, wrote to Edward Weston, one of the oldest and most experienced civil servants, now in retirement:

No Undersecretaries are yet declared, nor I believe, fix'd on in either Office. But I understand they will all be new ones. . . . ; it is thought improper and disagreeable to give the entire confidence which Undersecretaries must enjoy, to men who are known to be strongly attach'd or greatly obliged to other great personages.²

¹ See J. Charnock, *Biographia Navalis*, vol. vi. p. 266.

² July 13, 1765; *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, 10th Report, vol. i.; Weston Papers, p. 391. These and the Knox Papers, in *Various Collections*, vol. vi., contain most valuable material for a study of the eighteenth-century Civil Service.

The Secretaries to the Treasury, of whom the senior was concerned in the management of the House of Commons, almost always retired with their chiefs. When on the fall of the Coalition in December 1783, Lord North went into opposition,

of the two former Secretaries of the Treasury, Sir Grey Cooper continued to support him invariably; but Robinson, conceiving himself absolved from any obligation to accompany his ancient principal through all the consequences of his new political alliances, quitted altogether that party.¹

He managed for George III the general election of 1784 and thereby contributed to the political extinction of his former chief, which North resented so bitterly that when in 1792, on his deathbed, he wanted to do a last Christian deed he sent for Robinson and shook hands with him. And yet, thinking in present-day terms, we can hardly condemn Robinson, who considered that he served the Crown and not the individual Minister; which, in a meaner way, had been also the line taken in 1762 by Philip Carteret Webb, Solicitor to the Treasury. Although Hardwicke had raised Webb to his position, had supported him in his election business at Haslemere (the borough he represented in Parliament), and had always been a friend and patron to him, Webb openly declared his allegiance to Lord Bute at the dinner given in August 1762 by the High Sheriff at the Surrey Assizes. Newcastle thus described the scene in a letter to Hardwicke on August 11:

They then sat down, and every body was to name his toast. The first toast named was Sir John Evelyn;² that went round quietly. Then our friend, Mr. Carteret Webb named my Lord Bute, upon which the whole company at once got up and would not drink it. . . . This broke up the company. One Mr. Coates, a very con-

¹ Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, *Historical and Posthumous Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 236.

² Sir John Evelyn, first Baronet, of Wotton, Surrey.

siderable wine-merchant, called out, Who gave that toast? or proposed that health? Mr. Webbe replied, *He is my master* . . .¹

But Hardwicke replied on August 21:

I don't wonder at my old friend Webb's proposing the toast, nor blame him for it. 'Twas natural for the Solicitor to the Treasury to toast the head of it; and the reason he gave for it—*he is my master*, was a modest one, and took off from any political merit in it.²

Seats in Parliament made these civil servants to some extent politicians; but to some extent only, for again, in judging their actions in the House of Commons, one must remember that they were civil servants. The Secretaries to the Treasury almost invariably sat in Parliament. Of those between 1761 and the fall of Lord North's Government in 1782, James West, Samuel Martin, Jeremiah Dyson, Charles Jenkinson, Thomas Whately, Grey Cooper, Thomas Bradshaw, and John Robinson, sat in Parliament whilst employed at the Treasury; two only did not—William Mellish, who held the office for a fortnight in July 1765, and Charles Lowndes, who retained it as long as the Rockinghams were in power, but did not stand for Parliament till 1768. The Secretaries to the Admiralty, John Cleveland, senior (1751–63) and Philip Stephens (1763–95), all the time combined their tenure of the office with a seat in the House. Of the twenty-one men who were Under-Secretaries in the Southern and Northern Departments between 1761 and 1782, when the office was reorganised, eight sat in Parliament whilst employed in the Civil Service.³

The seat in the House naturally added to the importance and standing of civil servants, whilst their presence in Parliament was useful to their chiefs. In 1758 James

¹ Add. MSS. 32941, f. 207.

² *Ibid.* f. 326.

³ Robert Wood, Charles Jenkinson, William Burke, Richard Sutton, William Eden, Thomas Whately, Anthony Chamier, and Benjamin Langlois.

West, when refusing to give up a share of the emoluments of his office, produced the following version of the precept about the labourer and his hire : " I hope it is not arrogant to say, that in my poor opinion, whoever brings himself into Parliament and honestly discharges the duty of the office, amply deserves the lawful fees of it. . . ." ¹ Here is a short sketch of the lives of two such civil servants : of Robert Wood, an able man of a mean type, one of the numerous very intelligent but poor Irishmen who swarmed in the English political under-world about 1760 ; and of John Cleveland, a hard-working, hungry Scotsman, who acquired unrivalled knowledge of Admiralty matters, and thereby rose to a position of considerable importance.

Robert Wood is remembered chiefly as the Under-Secretary to whom Lord Granville, when signing on his death-bed the Treaty of Paris, quoted an appropriate passage from the *Iliad*, and against whom John Wilkes, in December 1763, obtained a verdict for £1000 over General Warrants. He first came into prominence as one of the most distinguished Homeric scholars of his time, and as the explorer of Palmyra and Baalbek. When in 1753 the young Duke of Bridgewater set out on his grand tour, Wood was chosen as the most appropriate companion and guide for him. On their return in 1756, Wood was appointed Under-Secretary of State, and in 1761 was returned by the Duke of Bridgewater for his pocket borough of Brackley, which he continued to represent till his death in 1771. Walpole in his *Memoirs of George III* says that " his general behaviour was decent as became his dependent situation ", but in 1769 accusations were raised against him that while Under-Secretary of State he dabbled in stocks, a thing deprecated even in an age which was not squeamish about " finance " in politics ; and when it was rumoured that he was to go out as secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Irish gentlemen

¹ See p. 491.

objected to his "mean birth, to his public and private character".¹

John Cleveland, whose father had been a naval officer and subsequently an Admiralty official,² became in 1751 its first secretary; he sat in Parliament 1741-43, and from 1747 till his death in 1763. His record is summed up in a Memorial which, some time in 1762, he addressed to the King;³ it should be noted that he nowhere mentions his service in Parliament and the votes which he naturally gave in favour of the Government—these were taken for granted:

Memorial of Mr. Cleveland, Secretary of the Admiralty.

That he has been near forty years in the naval service, in the several stations of a Chief Clerk in the Navy Office, Clerk of the Cheque and Muster Master at Plymouth, Commissioner of the Navy, and Secretary of the Admiralty.

That he was the active Commissioner of the Navy in the former Spanish war, and some time after the commencement of that with France, Mr. Corbett, then Secretary of the Admiralty being very infirm, and frequently incapable of his duty, Mr. Cleveland was made Joint Secretary with him, and carried on the business 'till the peace in 1748.

That the extensive and arduous operations of the present war have brought such an increase of business on the office of Secretary of the Admiralty, that Mr. Cleveland's health and eyesight is greatly impaired by incessant application to the faithful discharge of his trust, which he flatters himself to have done to the satisfaction of his superiors, and will not fail in his endeavours to continue the same whilst his health will permit.

But having a wife and great number of children, is very

¹ W. S. Hamilton to J. H. Hutchinson, December 2, 1769; *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Eighth Report, *Emly Papers*, p. 191. I have used in this sketch the very good article on Robert Wood contributed by Mr. W. P. Courtney to the *D.N.B.*

² For the Cleveland family see Burke, *Landed Gentry* (1894), under "Christie of Glyndebourne".

³ Add. MSS. 32945 f. 449: no date.

anxious to make some better provision for them than his own fortune will allow of after his death.

Therefore most ardently implores His Majesty, in consideration of his long and faithful services, to grant to Mrs. Cleveland such pension as shall be thought proper, upon the Irish or any other establishment, which provision for his family will add greatly to his happiness, and be the means of prolonging a life entirely devoted to the publick.¹

Cleveland's Memorial is certainly that of a humble and hard-working civil servant ; but there should be no mistake about it, he was a man of considerable importance. On the death of Lord Anson, in June 1762, Newcastle, anxious to retain some channel for soliciting jobs at the Admiralty, courted Cleveland's friendship. "I beg we may continue the same friendship", he wrote from Claremont on June 7 ; "and that you would now and then come and take a dinner with us here ; nobody can be more welcome".² Lord

¹ Meantime his eldest son, John Cleveland, junior (M.P. for Barnstaple, 1766-1802), had already some provision ; in the *Court and City Kalendar* for 1761 he appears as a clerk at the Admiralty (£100), Deputy Judge Advocate of the Admiralty (£146 p.a.), Agent for the Marines, and one of the Commissioners for the Sale of Prizes, but it is not certain that even this exhausts the list of his employments or sinecures. John Cleveland, sen., as Secretary to the Admiralty, had £800 p.a. I do not know of any sinecures or pensions held by him, but can hardly doubt his having had some. Anyhow, he enjoyed the advantage usually derived from being connected with the Government—his name frequently occurs among underwriters to Government loans. Thus in a loan anticipating the land tax for 1746, Sampson Gideon, the famous financier, signed for him for £2000 (R.O., T. 1/319) ; in 1760 he was billeted for £10,000 on Amyand's list of subscribers to the war loan (Add. MSS. 32901, f. 242). In 1762 his eldest son subscribed £10,000 (Add. MSS. 33040, f. 290). In all probability, these were "staggering" operations rather than *bona fide* subscriptions.

² Add. MSS. 32939, f. 205. This was not a new attention, born of need ; see, e.g., Cleveland's letter to Newcastle, March 22, 1759 : "I am very sorry, I cannot have the honour of waiting upon your Grace at dinner, Mr. Boscawen dining with me . . ." (Add. MSS. 32899, f. 37).

Halifax succeeded Anson at the Admiralty, and Cleveland wrote to Newcastle on June 16 :

Lord Halifax . . . has done me the honor to call upon me, and given me the strongest assurances of his friendship, and desired I would be upon the same footing with him as I was with Lord Anson.¹

Newcastle replied the same day :

I am heartily glad of it, upon your account, and indeed upon my own ; for, I dare say, he will receive most favorably any applications you shall make to him in behalf of my friends.²

And on June 17, Hardwicke wrote to Newcastle about Halifax :

His Lordship has certainly parts and activity, and I wish him success. The most prudent part is that I am told before he accepted, he took care to be assur'd from Cleveland that he would continue Secretary during the war.³

The Lawyers.—The legal profession was the most democratic of all those concerned with matters of State ; for there naturally was no way of rising at the Bar except by ability and hard work, and seldom, if ever, were men raised to the Woolsack or the Bench who had not distinguished themselves at the Bar. And as the path of law was hard walking it was left mostly to the feet of the poor and the steps of the needy, to younger sons or men of small origin. “ There are very few”, wrote Addison about the Inns of Court, “ that make themselves considerable proficients in the studies of the place, who know they shall arrive at great estates without them”. Many a Lord Chancellor or Lord Chief Justice was a man of no family, but not even the stupidest lordling would ever have dared to taunt a Lord Chancellor with plebeian extraction.

The connexion between the courts of law and the High Court of Parliament is so obvious that it is hardly necessary

¹ Add. MSS. 32939, f. 367.

² *Ibid.* f. 374.

³ *Ibid.* f. 384.

to enlarge upon it. They are akin in origin, in methods, to some extent even in the business they transact ; and some of the qualities most required are the same in both. Moreover, in the eighteenth century, Parliamentary politics were transacted, to a disastrous extent, in terms of jurisprudence. When the repeal of the Stamp Act came before Parliament much attention was paid to abstract rights, and the discussion consequently turned at least as much on legal rules and precedents as on policy—what did the Charters lay down on the point ? had Parliament taxed Durham or Calais before they were represented ? did the Post Office Act of New York form a precedent for taxing the Colonies ? etc. And on March 15, 1782, in the eighteenth year of the American disputes, when the vote of non-confidence was moved against Lord North's Government, Sir James Marriott, a Judge of the Admiralty, " defended the American war on the just ground that taxation and representation should go hand in hand ; and added, to the diversion of the whole House, that America was represented by the Members of the county of Kent ".¹ Eighteenth-century Anglo-Saxons thought that one could go into the law courts against nations, and in one county of Massachusetts the revolution was started with the grand jury indicting the British Parliament as a public nuisance.

Debates and business in Parliament being of an eminently legal character, " the gentlemen of the long robe " were welcome in the House, whilst to them it offered distinct advantages. Most of the highest honours of the

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1782, p. 164. This of course because all land in America was held in the Manor of East Greenwich. James Marriott, a Fellow and ultimately Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, was a prolific writer who composed innumerable and inordinately long letters, political tracts, legal discourses, and love poems to Hetty Thrale and the Duke of Newcastle. By obsequiousness to the great, he managed to obtain the Fellowship, rather against the inclination of the College, and by twenty years of further endeavours, managed to get himself into Parliament. He was knighted in 1778.

profession were, as they are even now, usually reached through the House of Commons. But even certain material advantages of an inferior character could best be attained through it: the legal places of profit under the Crown which were open to Members of Parliament were much more numerous than they are now; *e.g.* the Attorney and Solicitor-General to the Queen, the Solicitor to the Treasury, the Counsels to the Board of Trade, Admiralty, and other Government departments, more frequently than not were Members of Parliament. Moreover, the places of the eight Justices for Chester and Wales and of the Admiralty Judges were tenable with seats in Parliament, and Parliamentary considerations to some extent entered into their choice. Thus, in September 1756, on a vacancy in the office of Second Justice of Chester, James West (himself a barrister) wrote to Newcastle:

I hope your Grace will insist on regarding the House of Commons in the Justiceship of Chester. Probably Mr. Bankes would give the nomination for Corfe Castle for it, or Mr. Bond would be effectually secured by it. Moreton would be glad of it from the Oxford Circuit. Or some other Welch Judge's place if removed would serve younger and less aspiring men. I am not clear that Martyn would not quit his old friend and Parliament for it.¹

¹ Add. MSS. 32867, f. 41-2.—Henry Bankes, K.C., sat for Corfe Castle from 1741 till November 1762, when he was made a Commissioner of Customs, and the hereditary seat of his family was put at the disposal of the Government. The Bond family nominated to the other seat at Corfe Castle, and John Bond sat for it himself, 1747-61 and 1764-80. John Morton (this is the correct spelling of the name—he should not be confused with Sir William Moreton, Recorder for the City of London) was Member for Abingdon and was made Chief Justice for Chester in November 1762. The "Martyn" mentioned above is undoubtedly Samuel Martin, subsequently Joint Secretary to the Treasury; at that time he was attached to Leicester House and Pitt. West seems to have been under the impression that the Justiceship of Chester was not tenable with a seat in the House; if so, he was wrong; *e.g.* John Morton, M.P. 1747-70 and 1775-80, was Chief Justice of Chester, 1762-80.

And Hardwicke wrote to Newcastle on October 10 that Lord Feversham was pressing for the Justiceship to be given to James Hayes, M.P. for Downton; Feversham claimed to have returned "more Members at his own expence than almost any private man, without advantage to himself".¹ It was finally given to Taylor White, a brother of John White, M.P.

Lastly, what tended to increase the number of lawyers in the House was that the Recorders of Parliamentary boroughs, who were usually chosen from among the leading barristers of the circuit, had a considerable influence, especially in corporation boroughs, and often finished by having themselves returned to Parliament.

It is exceedingly difficult to say, at this distance of time, how many of the barristers who were returned to Parliament in 1761 were at that date "practising lawyers". In 1754, Hardwicke—and no one could know it better—put their number at 36;² it is not clear, however, whether he included, *e.g.*, Welsh or Admiralty judges among them. My own calculations for 1761, in which I include such judges, yield a slightly higher figure; about 40 will probably be as accurate an estimate as I can attempt.

CONTRACTS, REMITTANCES, AND LOANS : THE MERCHANTS AND BANKERS

John Douglas, D.D., the political scribe of Lord Bath, wrote on the eve of the general election of 1761 :

If our House of Commons is to be filled with men who are in trade, and who get themselves elected, only to be in the way of their trade; the contracts, the jobs, the subscriptions, the loans, the remittances &c., &c., with which a Minister can benefit them, are

¹ Add. MSS. 32868, ff. 122-23.

² "Abstract of the List divided into Classes"; Add. MSS. 35876, f. 1.

such a temptation to them, to assist in involving the nation in dangerous projects, and ruinous expence, that I know not whether we have most reason to dread a majority of greedy stock-holders, or of indigent placemen, for our representatives.¹

Professor Werner Sombart, in his brilliant studies on the origins of modern capitalism,² points to luxury trades and Government contracts as the two factors responsible for its growth prior to the "industrial revolution". The subject is too vast to be discussed here—I propose to deal with it in a different connexion. So much, however, is certain, that although Professor Sombart's generalisations seem too sweeping (the brewers were among the earliest capitalists in England, and capitalists would have arisen in the metal trades even without armaments),³ his thesis is fundamentally correct. By means of taxation and Government loans, agglomerations of capital were effected such as could not

¹ *Seasonable Hints from an Honest Man on the present important Crisis of a new Reign, and a new Parliament*, p. 46. The pamphlet was published anonymously; a MS. note in the British Museum gives the date of publication as March 16, 1761, and this seems borne out by extracts from the pamphlet having appeared in the *London Chronicle* between March 17 and 26.

² *Lurus und Kapitalismus* and *Krieg und Kapitalismus*.

³ See, e.g., H. S. Grazebrook, "The Origin of the Foley Family," in Marshall's *Genealogist*, vol. vi. (1882) pp. 117-22; the rise of their fortune is ascribed to Foley (or Brindley) having obtained from the Continent a method "for slitting iron into rods for the purpose of making nails". Also, from the account in Hutchinson's *History of Durham* (1787), vol. ii. pp. 441-3, it appears that in Ambrose Crowley's works at Swalwell the objects manufactured were not connected with armaments: "the principal part of the inhabitants are employed in iron works, but in the most massive articles, as ship anchors; they make hoes and shovels, and cast pots, kettles, and other domestic utensils". To some branches of the metal trade war seemed, in fact, prejudicial; see, e.g., the letter from Henry Bowdler to John Douglas, D.D., dated April 2, 1760, inquiring what chance there was of peace as he had several lead mines and a share in two smelt-houses, and trade was bad owing to the war but was expected to improve on conclusion of peace (MS. Top. Salop. c. 3, in the Bodleian at Oxford).

easily have arisen in private trade. The Paymasters of the Forces, of the Navy, and the Ordnance, held balances which were of the first importance in the money market; remittances of subsidies to allied countries or of money for the use of troops on foreign or colonial service were among the most coveted plums of finance; even receiverships of the land-tax were much sought after by provincial merchants and bankers as providing them with deposits of public money, when private deposits and savings were as yet insignificant.¹ On the other hand, the underwriting of Government loans was the chief financial transaction in an age when joint-stock companies were few and "Government stock" was the main object of speculation in the Alley.

Again, in trade, the only vast contracts for ordinary supplies and necessities of life were those connected with the arming, victualling, and clothing of the army and navy. Cloth factors and grain merchants, ironmasters and timber dealers, pulled every possible wire to obtain Government orders. Merchants trading to America and the West Indies would undertake the victualling and payment of British regiments in the Colonies. The Portugal and Spanish merchants,² whatever their own particular trade—the export of cloth or fish, the import of wine, etc.—scrambled to get the contracts for the garrisons of Gibraltar and Minorca, for regiments serving in the Peninsula,

¹ See, e.g., Martin Dunsford, *Historical Memoirs of Tiverton*, p. 246, about the way in which the receivership of the land-tax in the hands of a merchant gave him a financial superiority over his competitors. See also letter from Sir George Smith, Bart., to the Duke of Newcastle, Nottingham, November 20, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32876, f. 41), written on his separating in business from his brother Abel Smith, and asking the Duke to direct that "the land tax and excise money be returned by me and not by my brother Abel, that so the Government may not have their money made use of against themselves".

² A Spanish merchant in eighteenth-century parlance means, of course, a British merchant trading to Spain.

etc.¹ Subsidies to various German States, the commissariat of the British armies fighting in Germany and remittances of money for their use, opened a rich field for British merchants in the Dutch and Hamburg trade.² In short, most merchants trading to foreign parts knew of some convenient sector in the "far-flung battle line" and eagerly solicited contracts for/under "palm and pine". Fortunes were made and the greatness of families founded in army magazines and bread waggons. Defoe remarks in his treatise on *The Complete English Tradesman*, published in 1726, that not so many of the families of the English gentry

have rais'd themselves by the sword as in other nations, though we have not been without men of fame in the field too . . . yet how many more families among the tradesmen have been rais'd to immense estates even during the same time, by the attending circumstances of the war? Such as cloathing, the paying, victualling, and furnishing, etc., both army and navy. . . .³

The Government contracts were usually held with a seat in the House of Commons, whilst baronetcies, the crest over

¹ Their trade seems to have yielded as a rule considerable balances; e.g. some time in 1767 or 1768, Captain Cornwallis was ordered by Commodore Spry to proceed to Cadiz, on account of "merchants of the British factory at Cadiz requiring a ship to convoy the balance of their trade to their correspondents in England", and to take on board of his own ship "all such remittances of cash and jewels as the merchants of the factory shall desire" (see G. Cornwallis-West, *The Life and Letters of Admiral Cornwallis*, p. 39). But if these merchants could place their surplus cash at the service of the Government they made an extra profit on it; see, e.g., fees charged to the Treasury in 1767 by Messrs. Mayne, Burne, & Mayne for money "furnished by them for the use of the forces serving in Portugal"; Add. MSS. 38340, ff. 36-9.

² The size of those remittances and the profits on them can be gauged from the following example: The remittances made for the Treasury by John Gore, M.P., to Holland, Germany, Austria, and Piedmont, during the years 1741-51 amounted to a total of £5,046,169 (see Add. MSS. 33038, ff. 243-4); and the fees on such remittances in war-time varied from 5 to 15 per cent, much of this going, of course, for insurance.

³ Pp. 377-8.

the profits, had invariably to be gained by service in the House ; and a generation or two later, provided the money was preserved, the trade discontinued, and a seat in the House retained, a coronet was within the reach of the children or grandchildren of the successful Government contractors.

It is important, however, to guard against over-stating the connexion between Government contracts and membership of the House of Commons, very close as it was. When in war-time sums had to be raised, enormous for eighteenth-century resources and ideas, those best able to take up or place the loans had to be approached or considered, regardless of the House of Commons. In remittances, where even a small reduction in terms made a very considerable difference, the public interest could not be altogether subordinated to Parliamentary considerations, especially as Pitt and his country gentlemen were not slow in denouncing flagrant jobberies. In the correspondence which passed between H. B. Legge, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Duke of Newcastle in July 1758 concerning remittances to Germany,¹ the question of the most favourable terms to be obtained for the public and of not disobliging "the principal money'd men in the City" whose assistance would be required in the raising of loans, were alone considered, and Parliamentary considerations were not mentioned. Similarly in very special lines political calculations had to be sacrificed to efficiency ; thus, e.g., Thornton, the biggest English banker connected with Russia, was able to keep the remittances to that country entirely in his own hands and refuse all share in them to Joseph Mellish, a son-in-law of John Gore, M.P., and Thomas Walpole, M.P., who both applied to be admitted into these contracts.² Even some of the victualling and clothing contracts were held by men who did not sit in

¹ Add. MSS. 32881, ff. 215-16, 327-8, and 331-2.

² Add. MSS. 32861, ff. 157, 175-7, and 208.

the House. But as the biggest merchants and financiers, aiming at social advancement, desired seats in the House and were best able to acquire them, and as only the biggest capitalists could undertake, or be trusted with, contracts of the first magnitude, this alone, apart from Parliamentary considerations, would have resulted in the same business men being Members of Parliament and Government contractors. And where the difference in the terms offered was not excessive, naturally Members of Parliament had by far the better chance, which was one reason why merchants who were out for contracts tried to enter it.¹ In 1761, fifty or fifty-one merchants² were returned to Parliament, and of these at least thirty-seven can be proved to have had extensive business dealings with the Government. When

¹ Even for minor contracts, political "recommendations" were required; the following letter addressed to Newcastle by Bridger, his election agent at New Shoreham, on August 24, 1756, supplies a good example:

I am deeply concern'd in a ship that trades to Jamaica, and have for two year past carry'd Government stores, last year by the interest of Mr. Legg [H. B. Leggc, Chancellor of the Exchequer], the year before Lord Delawar wrote to his cousin Mostyn [M.P. for Weobly, Comptroller of the Navy since 1749] for us.

It is a matter of indifference to the Navy Board, but they always expect a recommendation, otherwise they will give no attention to an application from the captain or owners (Add. MSS. 32867, ff. 40-41).

² I am not absolutely certain whether T. P. Byde, M.P. for Herts, whose notorious speculations rendered him bankrupt in 1778, was in trade in 1761.—"Merchants" in the eighteenth century meant business men, and the term was as wide as "trade" is even now; bankers and manufacturers were included in it. I do not, however, include colonial or regimental agents, such as James Abercromby, M.P. for Clackmannanshire; nor country gentlemen who owned mines or even iron works but clearly did not belong to the business community of the City, such as Capel Hanbury, M.P. for Monmouthshire, the owner of the Pontypridd works, Herbert Mackworth, M.P. for Cardiff, and a mine-owner in South Wales, or Edward Montagu, M.P. for Huntingdon, who developed a coal mine on his Denton estate in Yorkshire.

in 1756, on the death of Peter Burrell, sen., the question arose of the succession to his contracts for some regiments at Gibraltar, Sir Joshua Vanneck asked for them on behalf of his son-in-law Thomas Walpole and his partners, the two Fonnereaus and John Bristowe, all four Members of Parliament; he concluded his letter to Newcastle with this warning:

. . . your Grace will no doubt consider the inconvenience that may arise from disobliging, in this critical juncture, four gentlemen Members [of Parliament] of independent fortunes, and with them their relations and friends.¹

Whilst Newcastle thus explained his view of the matter to Hardwicke: "As to the equity, my brother [Henry Pelham] thought four regiments were sufficient for four Members of Parliament".²

The Government itself encouraged merchants to undertake constituencies which were too costly for the ordinary run of candidates, and used contracts to indemnify them for their election expenditure; in fact, these men were kept in reserve for such occasions. Thus before the general election of 1754, Henry Pelham, when trying to induce Robert Neale to contest both seats at Wootton Bassett, a difficult and expensive constituency, told him that if he could not get a country gentleman, a merchant would be found to join him.³ Chauncy Townsend, M.P., who had started as a linen-draper⁴ but subsequently developed into a general merchant, victualling contractor, mine-owner, etc., having in a letter to James West, on June 26, 1754, enumerated the services he had rendered to Administration in elections at a cost to himself of £6000,

¹ See my article on "Brice Fisher, M.P.," in the *English Historical Review*, October 1927, pp. 525-6.

² *Ibid.* p. 526.

³ Robert Neale to the Duke of Newcastle, February 15, 1755; Add. MSS. 32852, f. 481.

⁴ See Kent's *London Directory* for 1738.

explained with regard to the reward he expected: "Money support I allways declined when hinted—half Gibraltar was my object".¹ Vanneck, in his letter to Newcastle on August 9, 1756, stated that his son-in-law Thomas Walpole, having been admitted by Henry Pelham to "the present contract for Gibraltar . . . thought himself obliged to undertake a very costly election" (at Sudbury in Suffolk) and complained of the Duke now introducing a new partner into it, when Thomas Walpole was "scarce repaid of his expense by the contract".² And when in December 1762 the Fonnereaus, who held three seats in the House, were on the point of deserting Newcastle for Bute, and Newcastle reminded Zachary Fonnereau of the assurances he had given,

'he owned very plainly that it was interest; that he had a family; his brother and he had spent thirty thousand pounds in elections; that he had got but little from my brother and me, and that he must look out to his interest. I suppose, his price is some valuable remittances to Minorca etc.; when a man knows himself that he is bought, one has nothing to say to him.'³

Newcastle was mistaken in his supposition concerning Fonnereau's "price"—the contract for Minorca was given to George Amyand, M.P. for Barnstaple, and Nicholas Linwood, M.P. for Stockbridge, whilst the reward of the Fonnereaus, besides being left in their own contracts, was a share of that which Thomas Walpole had held at Gibraltar and from which he was removed in the proscription of Newcastle's friends, carried through by Bute and Fox at the end of 1762. For contracts were the "places" of

¹ Add. MSS. 32735, f. 573. "Half Gibraltar" means, of course, half of the contracts for its garrison; he added that with Pelham "I had more merrett than all the Gibraltar people together"; i.e. the merchants holding the Gibraltar contracts.

² See my essay on "Brice Fisher, M.P.," in the *English Historical Review*, October 1927, p. 525.

³ The Duke of Newcastle to Thomas Walpole, December 17, 1762; Add. MSS. 32945, ff. 301-2.

merchants ; with one lonely exception I have not found any of them, between 1761 and 1784, in a political or Court office¹—most of them entered Parliament too late in life to aspire to a distinguished political career, and were moreover too profitably employed in their own trade to undertake a long apprenticeship in administrative places, whilst even the fattest sinecure could not equal the profits to be derived from contracts.

The following contractors appear in Newcastle's " Lists of Officers removed in the years 1762 and 1763, whose appointments arise in the Treasury " (the names in the right-hand column denote the men who were given their places) :²

Sept. 10, 1762. Joseph Mellish Tho. Walpole	{ Remitters to } { Germany }	Peregrine Cust.
Nov. 15, 1763. Sir Geo. Colebrooke Arnold Nesbitt	{ Contractors and } { remitters for } { North America }	Sir Saml. Fludyer. Adam Drummond.
Sept. 2, 1763. Thomas Walpole	{ Contractor for } { Gibraltar with } { Messrs. Burrell } { and Fonnereau }	Messrs. Burrell and Fonnereau remain in this contract.

¹ A few held, however, offices of a business character ; e.g. Abraham Hume was, for a few years during the Seven Years' War, Commissary-General of Stores (£3 a day) ; Peter Burrell, jun., was at one time Deputy-Paymaster of the Forces, etc. The one who held Court office was George René Aufrere, M.P. for Stamford, 1765-1774, married to a cousin of the Earl of Exeter ; his grandfather, a Huguenot, in 1683 fled from France to Holland and in 1700 came over to England with his son, the Rev. Israel Aufrere, George René's father. In France they had been Marquises de Colville, but they dropped the title on settling in England. G. R. Aufrere was for some time a Groom of the Bedchamber to George III (see on the family Agnew, *Protestant Exiles from France*, third edition (1886), vol. ii. pp. 334-7 and 391).

² Add. MSS. 33001, ff. 23-4. Every single man in this table was a Member of Parliament. For the removal of Thomas Walpole, see also correspondence between him and Newcastle, Add. MSS. 32946, ff. 17, 19, and 49-50.

A paper in the Liverpool MSS. at the British Museum on the "State of the several subsisting contracts for supplying His Majesty's forces serving abroad with provisions and for the remittance of their pay", drawn up in 1764, compares the terms of the contracts made by the former Treasury with those "made by the present Treasury Boards".¹ We can derive from it the names of the Government contractors for America, the West Indies, and the western coast of Africa; under Newcastle they were: James and George Colebrooke, Nesbitt & Franks, Chauncy Townsend, M. Woodford, the two elder Fonnereaus, Walpole and Burrell, Bristowe, Thomlinson and Hanbury, to which may be added Baker and Kilby, not mentioned in that paper. Eleven of these fifteen merchants were Members of Parliament, whilst of the remaining four, Moses Franks and Kilby were Americans working for their partners the American end of the business; Hanbury was a rich Quaker who had been prominent on the Government side in the Bristol election of 1754; whilst Woodford held one of the smallest among these contracts. In 1764 the contractors were Fludyer, Drummond & Franks, Fonnereau & Burrell, Cumming & Mason, Major & Henniker, Amyand & Linwood, Jones & Cust, Bacon & Lewis, whilst contracts with Chauncy Townsend, M. Woodford, and Thomlinson, Colebrooke, Nesbitt & Hanbury, concluded by the previous Administration, were still running. Of the twenty-one merchants here mentioned, sixteen were Members of Parliament (only Franks, Cumming, Mason, Woodford, and Hanbury were not).

¹ Add. MSS. 38338, ff. 109-11. This paper naturally does not mention any of the contracts which were in existence in 1761 for the troops and subsidies in Germany, as none of these continued in 1764, and the aim of the paper is a comparison between the terms of existing and previous contracts. A complete list of contractors could be compiled from the minute-books of the Treasury, Admiralty, War Office, Ordnance, etc., preserved in the Record Office, but the paper quoted above will suffice as illustration.

On the formation of the Rockingham Government, Sir George Colebrooke, who had remained faithful to Newcastle and had suffered for it, wrote to him on July 15, 1765 :

As you did me the honour, to put the question to me yesterday at Claremont, if there was anything, upon this change of Ministry, which occurred to me to have, permit me, my Lord, in a few words *to state to your Grace, how the matter of the contracts stands, in which I was engaged with the Treasury, before Mr. Grenville gave me notice to quit.*

There were then two contracts ; one for *the remittance of money* for the use of the troops in North America with Messrs. Thomlinson, Nesbit & Hanbury ; the other for *viatualling* those troops with Messrs. Nesbit & Franks.

The former expired a few months ago. . . .

The contract for viatualling was given by Mr. Grenville to Sir Saml. Fludyer, Mr. Drummond, and Mr. Franks—The two former had signed a contract for Pensicola, but they gave up that to Mr. Henniker, in order to come into the places of Mr. Nesbit and myself.¹

Now, my Lord, you will be pleased to observe, that Drummond is brother in law to the D. of Bolton and tho' Sir Saml. Fludyer has no pretensions to be well considered by the present Administration, yet Mr. Drummond, I doubt not, will have the protection of the noble Duke abovementioned, who will expect to see him continued in this thing, or that he should be considered in something else.

Thus, my Lord, it stands, as to the contracts, in which I was engaged before the coming in of the late Ministry ; and it was for these difficulties, as well as for the consideration of the long warning, which is requisite to make void the present agreements, that induced to give your Grace the answer I did to your very obliging offer, " That I did not know what to say as to the business of contracts ".

He concluded by asking for something consistent with his " walk in life " as a banker, and with the engagements which the Government had to other people.²

¹ Colebrooke, Thomlinson jun., Nesbitt, Fludyer, Drummond, and Henniker were all Members of Parliament.

² Add. MSS. 32967, ff. 434-6.

I take next the Government financiers—who were they? A list of them for 1759–60 can be compiled by taking the names of those whose advice Newcastle, as First Lord of the Treasury, sought in the severe financial crisis of 1759, and from the list of the underwriters to the £8,000,000 loan which was floated at the end of the year.

A series of papers drawn up by Newcastle and letters written by him between January and April 1759, testify to the intense anxiety he felt at the drain of specie from the Bank and the country, and “the impossibility of going on in this way”.¹ On April 18, 1759, he wrote from Claremont:

I have order'd Mr. West, and shall do it myself, when I come to town next week, to talk to the most knowing people in the City, vizt. Mr. Gideon, Alderman Baker, Sir Jos. Vanneck, Mr. Bristowe of the S.S. [South Sea] Company, Mr. J. Gore, Mr. Martin, and Mr. Amyand, upon the present state of credit, and the surprising fall of the stocks.²

And on August 4, 1759, he complained to his late secretary, Andrew Stone:

I saw yesterday the Governor [Merrick Burrell] and Dep. Governor of the Bank [Bartholomew Burton], Sir Joshua Vanneck, Mr. Joseph Mellish, Mr. Gore's partner, Amyand, Magens, and Gashry; and I find we shall have the greatest difficulty to borrow any considerable sum upon the Vote of Credit. . . .³

He directed, therefore, West

. . . to consider of proper persons, vizt.: Sir J. Vanneck, Mr. Gore, Mr. Bristowe, Ald^r Baker, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Gideon,

¹ See Newcastle's Memorandum of February 28, 1759; Add. MSS. 32888, f. 275.

² Add. MSS. 32890, f. 125.

³ Add. MSS. 32893, f. 481.

etc., to be turning their thoughts for raising the money the next year.¹

The negotiations for the loan were successfully concluded in December; and, on the 12th, Newcastle wrote in reply to a request from Lord Bath to be allotted £30,000:

The sum to be raised this year . . . (viz. eight millions) was so great, that I found it absolutely necessary to agree for it with the principal and most responsible men in the City. . . . It is not now in my power to oblige them to lessen the sums they have agreed for. If your Lordship had sent me your commands last week, I should have taken care that they should have been complied with. . . .²

The following list³ gives the names of these "principal and most responsible men in the City" and the sums underwritten by them:

¹ "Memorandums for Mr. West", September 9, 1759; Add. MSS. 32895, f. 295.

² Lord Bath to the Duke of Newcastle, December 11, 1759; Add. MSS. 32900, f. 5; the Duke of Newcastle to Lord Bath, December 12, f. 16. Allotments for private people Newcastle secured by billeting them on the lists of the principal underwriters. Two such lists are preserved among the Newcastle Papers. "I send your Grace Sir Joshua Vanneck's and Mr. Amyand's list . . .", wrote James West to Newcastle on December 21, 1759. "I shewed each of those gentlemen the persons your Grace had allotted to them and they were extreamly pleased" (Add. MSS. 32900, f. 383). On Amyand's list (Add. MSS. 32901, f. 242) there are thirty-seven names for a total of £264,000, leaving £660,000 to his own firm and its customers. Nineteen of the people billeted on him were M.P.'s—among others, John Wilkes for the sum of £5000. Vanneck's list (f. 240) contains eighteen persons for a total of £200,000, leaving his firm a clear million. His boarders include the Duke of Devonshire, the Earls of Lincoln, Ashburnham, Hertford, and Verney, Lords Falmouth, Luxborough, and Anson, Lady Katherine Pelham (widow of Henry Pelham), John Roberts (Pelham's late secretary), Sir Edward Hawke (the Admiral), and a few Members of Parliament.

³ Add. MSS. 32901, f. 238.

£

The proprietors of Tallies and Orders made out at the Exchequer by virtue of an Act of the last Session of Parliament for enabling His Majesty to raise the sum of one million for the uses and purposes therein mentioned		1,000,000
Mr. Burrell for the Bank of England		466,000
Mr. Bristow for the South Sea Company		330,000
Mr. Godfrey for the East India Company		200,000
Sir Joshua Vanneck & Co.		1,200,000
Mr. Amyand		924,000
Sir James Colebrooke		480,000
Mr. Magens		460,000
Mr. Touchet		420,000
Mr. Nesbitt		350,000
Mr. Muilman		330,000
Mr. Fonnercau		250,000
Mr. Salvadore		250,000
Mr. Martin		250,000
Mr. Honywood		250,000
Mr. Belchier		250,000
Mr. Beckford		100,000
Mr. Hart		100,000
Mr. Fox		80,000
Mr. John Gasper Ringmacher		100,000
Mr. Edwards		50,000
Mr. Gideon		60,000
Mr. Thornton		100,000
		<hr/> 8,000,000

From these sources, checked by other correspondence, I select the names of twenty-two leading City men in close touch with the Treasury and deeply engaged in Government finance ;¹ the constituencies marked against their

¹ Henry Fox, M.P., Paymaster-General of the Forces, and Francis Gashry, M.P., Treasurer and Paymaster of the Ordnance, are omitted, as they were not City men and operated with Government money, though, of course, at their own risk and to their own advantage ; further, I omit W. Belchier, M.P., who became bankrupt in 1760 ; William Beckford, M.P., because he was not, strictly speaking, a financier, but merely as one of the richest men in the British Empire,

names without any dates are those for which they were returned at the general election of 1761 :

George Amyand, M.P. for Barnstaple, Devon.
William Baker, M.P. for Plympton, Devon.
John Bristow, M.P. for Arundel, Sussex.
Merrick Burrell, M.P. for Grampond, Cornwall.
Bartholomew Burton, M.P. for Camelford, Cornwall.
Sir James Colebrooke, Bart., M.P. for Gatton, Surrey.
George Colebrooke, M.P. for Arundel, Sussex.
John Edwards.
Thomas Fonnereau, M.P. for Sudbury, Suffolk.
Z. P. Fonnereau, M.P. for Aldborough, Suffolk.
Sampson Gideon.
John Gore (M.P. for Grimsby, Lincs, 1747-1761).
Frazer Honywood, M.P. for Steyning, Sussex.
Nicholas Magens.
John Martin (M.P. for Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, 1747-54).
Joseph Mellish, M.P. for Grimsby, Lincs.
Henry Muilman.
Arnold Nesbitt, M.P. for Cricklade, Wilts.
Joseph Salvadore.
John Thornton.
Samuel Touchet, M.P. for Shaftesbury, Dorset.
Sir Joshua Vanneck.

Thus 15 of these 22 men at one time or another sat in Parliament, and 13 were returned to it in 1761. Of the remaining seven, Gideon and Salvadore as Jews, and Vanneck (and probably also Magens) as foreign-born, were debarred from it; but Vanneck's son-in-law, Thomas Walpole, sat in Parliament, and both sons of Vanneck (Joshua and Gerald) and the son of Gideon entered it subsequently. So did Thornton's three sons (one of whom was Henry Thornton, the friend and collaborator of Wilberforce). And Muilman stood in 1761 for Haslemere, but was defeated.

subscribed a sum which placed him among the chief underwriters; and Godfrey, Hart, and Ringmacher, whose names otherwise do not appear among the City friends of the Treasury.

On some occasions the Government would go in search of a financial expert for the House of Commons, who could support it in debate with his technical knowledge. Thus in April 1759, when on a vacancy at Camelford Newcastle instructed James West to consider who would answer the purpose best, West produced six names, seeking among them "a speaker . . . some bold, spirited man with confidence and volubility", but sadly concluded that it was difficult to find these qualities "joined to fidelity".¹ But, except when forced by circumstances, Government did not willingly encourage "the moneyed men" to enter Parliament—in Newcastle's words, the "East Indians, West Indians, citizens and brokers . . . are not very reputable and yet very troublesome Members".²

I conclude with a letter written by James West when, on the death of Frazer Honeywood, a banker and Member for Steyning, Newcastle wished a relative of the Duke of Portland to succeed him in the borough. On January 31, 1764, West informs Newcastle that Honeywood's partner, Richard Fuller, will have to be the successor, and the reason given—the free postage which this secured for the firm—was in all probability one which to many merchants with an extensive inland correspondence added considerably to the attractions of the House of Commons:

Mr. West presents his respects to the Duke of Newcastle. He is just now informed from Sir W. Baker,³ that he advised Mr. Fuller⁴

¹ See for the text of the letter, pp. 420-21.

² See p. 260.

³ Alderman Sir William Baker, M.P. for Plympton, 1747-68, a friend and adherent of Newcastle's.

⁴ Richard Fuller, M.P. for Steyning, February 9, 1764-68, and for Stockbridge, 1768-74, was a son of Joseph Fuller, a Baptist minister. His grandfather, a well-known miser, was "poor Mr. Fuller, who had an estate for each of his [six] sons, but nothing for himself". Richard's brother William, with whom he was at one time in partnership, died "a miser worth £400,000". About them see J. F. Fuller, "Pedigree of Fuller of Blewbury", *Miscell. Gen. et Herald.*, fifth series, vol. i. pp. 81-88. They were no relations of the Fullers of Sussex and Jamaica.

last night to apply to Sir John Honeywood¹ for his interest at Steyning, as Sir John declared that neither he or his son would stand, and Mr. Atkins also declining, Sir John has given his interest to Mr. Fuller and an express is gone to Steyning to that purpose. As the correspondence of the shop is very great, having the draughts of the Bristol Bank, the very postage of their letters would amount to near £800 pr. ann., and it is otherwise thought to be of great service to the house to have one of the partners in Parliament. Sir Wm. Baker was one of the first promoters and encouragers of the shop, and has a great influence over Mr. Fuller. Mr. West would have rejoiced exceedingly to have been able to have served the Duke of Newcastle or the Duke of Portlands recommendation.²

IMMUNITY.

Robbers.—"They likewise say that Bacon was obliged to get member, coast what it would, other ways he could not pass his accompts as contractor, he pay'd five guineas a man att Ailsbury. . . ." ³ This was Anthony Bacon, Wilkes's successor as Member for Aylesbury, a Manxman who started his business career in the Maryland trade, subsequently became a Government contractor for the victualling of troops in the West Indies and Africa, a mine-owner and the founder of important iron works in Glamorganshire, a mining adventurer in Cape Breton, and one of the greatest manufacturers of munitions during the American Revolution. Whether the reason for his first

¹ Sir John Honeywood, third Bart. Frazer Honeywood left him his fortune, to the disappointment of poorer relatives, who were two degrees nearer to him, and had "expected to inherit considerable property" from him. But as the one had much money and no children, and the other was a baronet, they both thought themselves more closely related to each other than they really were. See an article by W. D'Oyly Bayley, "The Relationship of the Honeywoods, Baronets, of Kent, to Mr. Frazer Honeywood, the Banker", in J. S. Nichol's *Topographer and Genealogist* (1846), vol. ii. pt. viii. pp. 189-92.

² Add MSS. 32955, f. 320.

³ Alexander Fall to Charles Jenkinson, January 29, 1764; Add. MSS. 38202, f. 67.

entry into Parliament is correctly stated in the letter quoted above, I cannot say ; but in principle it was plausible. Twenty years later it was to be the regular practice of nabobs returning "from India's plundered land", to insure against inquiries into the origin of their fortunes by providing themselves with seats in Parliament.

Muddlers.—On the failure of the expedition against Rochefort, in the summer of 1757, Hardwicke favoured an inquiry into the conduct of the land officers, though most of them were Members of Parliament :¹

It is true that the officers concerned are men of great quality, rank and distinction ; but, if that objection should finally prevail, men of quality ought not to be let into the Army, for it will ruin the service. Indeed I have for some time thought that the Army was too full of them. . . .

And again on October 24 :

Had Byng's case been enquir'd into by a board of admirals, without the solemnity of a court martial, do you think the opinion would have turn'd out as it did ? I know some of the best of them think it a hardship put upon them ; and how can they deal with Members of Parliament and men of great quality ? I know this was said by some of them, upon occasion of the last reference, in the case of the officers, who concurr'd in the Council of War at Gibraltar.²

In extreme cases even Members of Parliament had to suffer—witness the fate of Admiral George Byng, M.P., and General Lord George Sackville, M.P. ; but for minor transgressions the membership of the House was apt to procure immunity.

Bastards.—This essay starts with the reason which in 1749 Lord Chesterfield gave to his son, Philip Stanhope, for wishing to see him in Parliament, the most universal, most obvious of reasons—"you must first make a figure

¹ Hardwicke to Newcastle, October 16, 1757 ; Add. MSS. 32875, f. 144.

² *Ibid.* f. 255.

there if you would make a figure in your country"; and here is another reason which Chesterfield confided to Newcastle in 1753, when he saw that his son's illegitimate birth counted against him in his career as a diplomat :

As I shall bring him into the next Parliament at my own (and probably no small) expence, I flatter myself that his seat there will be so far like the cloak of charity as to cover one sin at least, and upon my word I know of no other for which he wants a cover.¹

Bankrupts.—"I had rather see any child of mine want than have him get his bread by voting in the House of Commons", wrote Governor Pitt to his son on January 16, 1706.² But Robert Andrews, the political and financial agent of his grandson Thomas Pitt, the heir to Old Sarum, wrote to Newcastle on February 28, 1761 :

As to his own burroughs he now tells me, his affairs in regard to his creditors are such that they cannot be finally ended under eight or nine months : and till they are ended, he shall be liable to arrests and vexatious actions from his creditors and therefore he proposes to choose Mr. Coke at Okehampton and one other at Old Sarum, that shall be named, and to fill the other seat at O.S. himself, under an engagement to relinquish it at the time his affairs are settled, which he thinks will be before the House meets next winter, and therefore intends to make no use of his election, but to secure himself from his creditors. . . .³

And again on March 2 :

He bids me assure your Grace with the utmost truth and sincerity, that he has fairly and honestly no other motive to desire being chose at O.S. than what I have mentioned . . . and that he will religiously keep his engagement to vacate his seat again, when his perplexities are ended, to whoever he shall be directed to fill it with.⁴

¹ June 30, 1753 ; Add. MSS. 32732, f. 133. Besides Ph. Stanhope, two more bastards were returned to Parliament in 1761 : John Manners, M.P. for Newark, son of Lord William Manners ; and Ch. Fitzroy Scudamore, M.P. for Hereford, son of the second Duke of Grafton.

² See p. 21.

³ Add. MSS. 32919, f. 340.

⁴ *Ibid.* ff. 378-9.

Thomas Pitt, the elder brother of Chatham, had entered Parliament in 1727, directly he came of age ; he managed in Cornwall the general elections of 1741 and 1747 for Frederick, Prince of Wales, and saw himself in future next to the throne ; but in 1751, with the death of his patron, his chances disappeared, whilst the fortune amassed by his grandfather of diamond fame had been wasted, even his credit exhausted ; he had to give up Parliament, pawn his boroughs, seek obscurity, and flee the country. In 1761, as a man old beyond his years, bare of all hope, full of insane bitterness and wild griefs, he once more had himself returned for that ploughed field of Old Sarum which his grandfather had bought with money acquired in India (" Take care ", he had written about a burgage in 1706, " to plant the piece of new ground with as many trees as it will well take and the improvement of it may in time pay for the vote . . . "). Thomas Pitt took refuge in that miraculous field. He touched it and was safe ; his name was in the writ returned from it on March 30, 1761 ; his creditors could not reach him. Four months later he did not need Parliamentary privilege any more, for the " fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life " had signified that " all was well with him again ".

His son, though a better man, promptly repudiated the solemn engagement with regard to the filling of the vacancy.¹

¹ Thomas Pitt, jun., wrote to Robert Andrews on August 21, 1761 : " I have been often grieved at the scandalous traffick he made of his Parliamentary interest, but cou'd they [the Ministers] suppose me bound in other respects, they wou'd certainly alter their opinion when they come to know, that my father was under a previous engagement to myself to elect me at O.S. when I consented to the raiseing so large a sum for the payment of his debts, and this agreement therefore ought certainly to have taken place of every other consideration " (Add. MSS. 32927, f. 156).

II

THE ELECTORAL STRUCTURE OF ENGLAND

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THE DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS

THE British House of Commons in the eighteenth century consisted of 558 Members—489 elected in England, 24 in Wales, and 45 in Scotland. Of the 246 English constituencies, the City of London returned four Members, 240 two Members, and 5 one Member each; Scotland and Wales had single-member constituencies. Of the 489 English Members at the accession of George III, 80 represented the forty counties, 4 the two Universities, whilst 405 were returned by 204 cities and boroughs; of the 24 Welsh Members, 12 sat for counties and 12 for boroughs; of the 45 Scottish Members, 30 represented county constituencies, one was returned by Edinburgh, and 14 by groups of boroughs.

England elected almost 88 per cent of the House of Commons, and English boroughs almost 73 per cent. Within England the distribution of the Parliamentary boroughs was uneven, as during the formative ages of Parliament population and wealth had been concentrated in the south, even more than they still were in 1760. Including the knights of the shires, Cornwall had in the eighteenth century 44 Members in Parliament, Devonshire 26, Dorset 20, Somerset 18, Wiltshire 34—together, 142; about one-fourth of the House of Commons was thus chosen by the five counties of south-western England. Hampshire

returned 26 and Berkshire 9 Members. The three eastern counties south of the Thames, Surrey, Sussex, and Kent, together with the Cinque Ports, returned 60 Members. Thus 237 Members (*i.e.* more than 40 per cent of the House of Commons) were elected in the ten counties south of Bristol and the lower Thames. But the 56 Members for London and Middlesex and the counties in its neighbourhood—Bucks, Beds, Herts, Essex, and Suffolk—must be added to this “southern division”. This makes a total of 293 Members, *i.e.* more than half of the House of Commons.

Another remarkable feature of the geographical distribution of English Parliamentary boroughs is that almost one-third of them were sea-ports. This again was a heritage from the early times when even inland trade, carried on mainly by river and coastwise, centred in towns on the seaboard. But soon the tendency to concentration set in in the seaborne trade, and London, together with a dozen “out-ports”, swallowed up the trade of the smaller harbours.¹ However much decayed, these still retained their Parliamentary representation, henceforth their most lucrative branch of business.

The obsolete distribution of seats naturally produced electoral absurdities and corruption. But in practice there was a redeeming side to it—as it usually happens with us, dead forms were made to serve live forces. In counties such as Cheshire, Durham, or Leicestershire, where only the county and the county town returned Members to Parliament, there was no room for outsiders; in fact, hardly

¹ “An Account of the Receipt in the Out-Ports of England”, drawn up in 1764 (Add. MSS. 38337, ff. 53-4) covers 71 “out-ports”, of which 47 were Parliamentary boroughs. Of 15 only did the receipts in 1763 exceed £10,000, while those of the three largest among them—Bristol (£232,000), Liverpool (£135,000), and Hull (£61,000)—by far exceeded the sum total of the other twelve. Probably these three out-ports, together with London, already held at least half of the trade of England. Of the 15 out-ports with receipts exceeding £10,000, 7 only were in the “southern division”.

enough to satisfy the Parliamentary ambitions of their own "countrymen". Nor would a more numerous representation, if based on genuine constituencies, have provided many seats for strangers. But the over-represented southern counties, with their rotten boroughs, offered a substantial surplus for national purposes, and it was there that seats were found for professional politicians, civil servants and big merchants, *i.e.* for the administrative and commercial classes concentrated in London. At present the national as against the local type of candidate is planted out in the constituencies by the party organisations; in the eighteenth century this was done with the help of rotten or corrupt boroughs. Moreover, it should be noted that about 1760 London was probably the worst under-represented part of England; the area now under the L.C.C. contained more than one-tenth of the population of Great Britain; and even if heads were counted (as now), and not purses weighed (as in the eighteenth century), it ought to have had almost sixty Members. But its statutory representation consisted of only ten: four Members for the City of London and six for Middlesex, Westminster, and Southwark. The decayed boroughs of the south primarily supplied the corrective for this under-representation of classes which governed in London, but could hardly have obtained many seats in independent provincial constituencies. The Government was the chief buyer or dealer in Cornish and Devonshire boroughs, whilst the London merchants, unless they obtained their seats through the Government or happened to be connected by origin, family ties, or their trade, with some more distant county, cultivated those nearer London.

In 1770 Sir John Molesworth, a knight of the shire for Cornwall, supported a motion for disabling revenue officers from voting in Parliamentary elections. "Those tools of any Administration", he said, "have prevailed over the spoils of the East; over all family connexions, and the

landed interest. If this question is carried, I shall hope to see boroughs a less rotten part of the Constitution. I shall meet more of my country neighbours in this House. . . .”¹ This might indeed have pleased patriotic or ambitious Cornishmen; but, though something can be said in favour of civil servants and even of mere placemen in the eighteenth-century Parliament, it is hard to see what reason could be adduced for a greater number of Cornishmen than it actually contained; there was quite a sufficient quota of Boscawens, Bullers and Bassets, Trevanions, Trelawnys and Treises.

THE COUNTIES

In all English counties the franchise was the same—ever since 1430 (8 Henry VI) the electorate consisted of forty-shilling freeholders. As the value of money had declined considerably in the intervening 330 years, by 1761 this franchise had become very wide; especially as a very liberal interpretation was put on the term of freehold, extending it to leaseholds for life, annuities, rent-charges, mortgages, etc., and even to various petty offices.² In the smallest county in England, Rutlandshire, the number of voters was reckoned in 1760 to be 609;³ in the largest, Yorkshire, 15,054 electors voted in 1741, and 23,007 in 1807. The total electorate in the counties in 1761 cannot be accurately ascertained or calculated. County elections were inordinately expensive, and therefore very few English counties went to the poll—at the general election of 1747 only two contests were fought out to the end (Middlesex and Staffordshire); in 1754, five (Herefordshire, Hertford-

¹ See Sir Henry Cavendish, *Debates of the House of Commons*, vol. i. p. 446.

² See E. Porritt, *The Unreformed House of Commons*, vol. i. pp. 22-23.

³ See letter from Lord Hardwicke to Sir Gilbert Heathcote, December 4, 1760; Add. MSS. 35596, ff. 197-201.

shire, Kent, Oxfordshire, and Rutland); and in 1761, three (Durham, Hertfordshire, and Westmorland). The figures therefore have to be taken from different years and only very rough and approximate estimates are possible; moreover, these are based on the number of votes actually cast at various polls, and must therefore be short of the potential electorate. Such a calculation yields a probable total of about 160,000 actual voters for all the English counties, *i.e.* an average of about 4000 for each.

This might seem a numerous electorate. But in reality, as the voting was open and usually even recorded in print in the so-called poll-books, people in dependent positions could seldom exercise a free choice. As in the eighteenth century the agricultural interest was dominant in the counties, the result of county elections was determined as a rule by the big landowners—the territorial magnates and the country gentlemen. The counties, in fact, represented this one class only, and the candidates were often fixed upon at the Assizes or some local races.

In a few counties only was there any serious influence of a different character. Middlesex was dominated by its London boroughs; and also in Surrey the London boroughs were gaining in size and importance. "In some parts of the county, the country gentlemen are said not to like the influence which the borough of Southwark and parts adjacent have in the election for knights of the shire", wrote "Surriensis" in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1788.¹ "But if, in Queen Anne's time, that commercial influence was strong enough to bring in a Member . . . we must not wonder if it should operate effectually in the present times."

¹ *Historical Account of the Elections for Surrey*, p. 1053. "Surriensis" was Sir Joseph Mawbey, a Vauxhall distiller, M.P. for Southwark, 1761-74, and for Surrey, 1775-90. The identity is disclosed in the obituary note of Sir Joseph Mawbey in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1798, vol. i. p. 543: "His correspondence with our Magazine may be seen in his history of the Surrey elections, vol. lviii. p. 1052".

Still, judging by the poll-book of 1774, even at that date the "metropolitan" vote in Surrey could hardly have exceeded twenty per cent.¹ Also in the other home counties a certain metropolitan influence was felt through freeholders of these counties settled in London, and through London merchants owning estates in its neighbourhood. In certain western counties the clothiers and their employees had to be reckoned with; Nicolson Calvert, M.P. for Tewkesbury, when recommending "the agent for the body of clothiers" at Gloucester to Newcastle for a Government appointment, remarked:

It would be needless for me to acquaint your Grace how opulent and significant a body of men they are in the County of Gloucester, and as well attach'd to the present Government as any set of men in this Kingdom.²

Even in the vast county of Yorkshire the "trading places" were of some importance,³ and Sir George Savile was described in 1753 by one of his supporters as "the properest candidate for this trading county as the situation of his property makes the prosperity of trade more immediately his concern".⁴

In Hampshire the Government had an "interest" through the Portsmouth and Gosport docks, the Crown

¹ There is in the British Museum a MS. poll-book of the by-election for Surrey in 1742 (Add. MSS. 39291), with a summary of the places of residence of the 3428 freeholders who voted in that election. 557, i.e. slightly more than 16 per cent, were resident outside the county—152 of them in London, 31 in Westminster, and 170 in Middlesex; this yields a total of 353, and surely not the whole of Middlesex can be included in the "metropolitan" area north of the Thames. 135 were resident in Southwark and 204 in the Hundred of Brixton, which extended well into the country. If we put the total "metropolitan" vote at 500, this is less than 15 per cent.

² May 31, 1760; Add. MSS. 32906, f. 399.

³ See letter from Andrew Wilkinson to the Duke of Newcastle, Boroughbridge, July 13, 1753; Add. MSS. 32732, ff. 236-7.

⁴ Same to same, July 19, 1753; Add. MSS. 32732, ff. 313-14.

tenants in the New Forest, and through its dependants in the Isle of Wight ; and because of H. B. Legge's "disgrace" in 1761 and the defeat of the Court candidate in 1779, it forms part of the regular stock-in-trade of text-books. But a careful analysis of the poll-book of 1779 shows that even in Hampshire the direct Government influence can hardly have affected more than one-tenth of the electorate, if so much. Also in Kent the Government had a certain direct influence, especially through the Chatham docks and the Cinque Ports,¹ and in Cornwall through the numerous revenue officers.²

¹ See letter from Lord Sondes to the Duke of Newcastle, August 30, 1767: ". . . the weight of Government, which is more considerable in this county, than any other, having so many churches, docks, hospitals, and custom houses almost in every town from Greenwich to Dover, and I believe no instance of any body loosing the election, that stood upon the Government interest except in 1734, which was owing to the Excise" (Add. MSS. 32984, f. 368). See also letter from Lord Winchilsea to Newcastle on the same subject, August 25, 1767 (*ibid.* ff. 325-6). But see on the other hand the letter which Sir George Oxenden, an old Kentish Whig with a rare knowledge of the county, wrote to Lord Hardwicke on December 9, 1760, at a time when the Tories professed hopes of carrying both seats: ". . . the Tories are very uppish . . . possibly they depend upon the Court interest, in the docks, ports &c. Now, my Lord . . . I will venture to prophesy . . . , that even supposing that to be the case, we shall be their masters, provided the Whigs are not broke among themselves" (Add. MSS. 35692, ff. 434-5).

² See, *e.g.*, letter from Admiral Boscawen, who intended to stand for Cornwall, to the Duke of Newcastle, October 11, 1760: "I . . . intreat your Grace would favour me with the vote and interest of the officers of the Revenue, which are many, in this county and of great weight" (Add. MSS. 32913, ff. 63-4). Whilst revenue officers were as yet free to vote in elections, those of the Post Office were strictly forbidden from interfering in Parliamentary elections. None the less, the Post Office formed a convenient election agency in the hands of the Government ; its offices in the small towns were places of concourse, conversation, and intelligence, and the postmasters could sometimes be of considerable help by delaying, directing, or misdirecting correspondence at election time, or even by culling useful information

Other possible instruments of Government influence in the counties were the bishops and clergy, who formed a network over the whole of England, and as landholders had a certain electoral "interest" of their own. The help of the episcopate was often invoked. Thus Sir William Maynard, when standing for Essex in 1759, thought it "of great consequence to him" if Newcastle applied "to the Bishop of London for his interest with the clergy. . . ." ¹ Similarly, Lord Clanricarde, in the Hampshire election of 1759, asked Newcastle for a letter from the Bishop of Winchester in support of Legge, which would enable him to "carry many of the clergy. . . ." ² But the hold which the bishops had on them was, of course, limited, and a Whig Government could never rely on the great mass of the lower clergy. Thus Thomas Talbot, the Bishop of Oxford, wrote to Hardwicke on February 8, 1753 :

The small property I have in Oxfordshire is either in the hands, or in the neighbourhood, of persons whom I cannot influence. . . . I have no preferments to give the clergy. I cannot promise or threaten to behave to them according as they vote.³

To sum up: the direct influence and power of the Government in county elections can be described as negligible; if the Crown or Administration interfered at all in these elections, they had to work mainly through the big landowners, who, if united, were the deciding influence in thirty-nine out of forty English counties.

The regular formula for candidates in the counties was

from letters opened by them. In spite of all prohibitions the Post Office was used in elections; thus at a by-election in May 1760, Newcastle asked Lord Bessborough, Joint P.M.G., to "give the usual directions, that the several post-masters in the county of Kent may know that they are to support Sir Wyndham Knatchbull's interest" (Add. MSS. 35692, f. 416).

¹ Lord Rochford to the Duke of Newcastle, April 17, 1759; Add. MSS. 32890, f. 118.

² November 3, 1759; Add. MSS. 32898, ff. 73-4.

³ Add. MSS. 35592, f. 30.

to ask the "Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders" for their votes and interest—"interest" denoting the pressure which they could bring to bear on dependants. Neither in counties nor in boroughs was the least attempt made to hide or disguise the methods of compulsion and intimidation by which votes were secured; the resultant of social forces was thus obtained without recourse to election stunts. It was taken for granted that the tenants would vote as instructed by their landlord or his agent, and the methods employed were so common that they were seldom named. Here, however, are a few explicit statements: "I have . . . wrote . . . to my steward to engage my tenants to vote for Mr. Legge", wrote Sir John Miller of Lavant to Newcastle on November 7, 1759.¹ Or again, Lord Monson, on November 29, 1760: "Mr. Whichcote begs your Grace will use your best endeavours with Lord Irwin and Mr. Ingram, as no orders as yet are given to their stewards. . . ." Daniel Parker Coke, one of the most upright and independent men of his time and a barrister of very high standing, declared in his nomination speech at Nottingham in 1803 that he considered it "quite fair" that landlords should exercise political influence over their tenants, and that he would be "sorry to see the day when men of property would not use such influence".² Indeed, the idea that tenants owed political suit to their landlords survived deep into the nineteenth century. In the Flintshire election of 1841, one of the Grosvenor family

complained of Mr. Gladstone for violating the sacred canons of electioneering etiquette by canvassing Lord Westminster's tenants. 'I did think,' says the wounded patrician, 'that interference between a landlord with whose opinions you were acquainted and his tenants was not justifiable according to those laws of delicacy and propriety which I considered binding in such cases.'³

¹ Add. MSS. 32898, f. 165.

² See article about him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

³ John Morley, *The Life of William Ewart Gladstone* (1905), vol. i. p. 239.

But it was at all times the first article of constitutional cant to describe the right of freely choosing representatives as "the most valuable privilege of every English freeholder".

In reality, because of the influence which the landlord had over his tenants, the political position of a man in his county, and even to some extent the claim which he could urge for appearing as candidate for its representation in Parliament, was measured by his rental. At the general meeting at York in 1753, Lord Rockingham, when putting forward Sir George Savile as candidate for the county, emphasised "the great property" which Savile had in it,¹ whilst Thornhagh, to give proper weight to his support of Savile, "talked a great deal of his brother's interest and estate".² When Lord Exeter applied to Sir Gilbert Heathcote for his support in Rutlandshire, Lord Hardwicke was at a loss what advice to give, as "an absolute submission may exclude him for ever from taking advantage of the great property which he has in that county".³ In September 1760 the Lincolnshire gentlemen serving in the militia bethought themselves "that as they were so considerable a body together, and had so large a share of property, they would do well to consult together about the proper persons to represent the county. . . ." ⁴ But there is no need further to multiply examples of this kind, which could be done indefinitely; the conditions which they illustrate were the inevitable result of open voting by people in dependent positions.

When high-sounding phrases were used in an election

¹ Andrew Wilkinson to the Duke of Newcastle, York, July 16, 1753; Add. MSS. 32732, ff. 282-3.

² Henry Pelham to the Duke of Newcastle, Scarborough, July 18, 1753; *ibid.* ff. 301-4.

³ Lord Hardwicke to the Duke of Newcastle, June 11, 1760; Add. MSS. 32907, f. 157.

⁴ John Green, Dean of Lincoln, to Lord Hardwicke, September 27, 1760; Add. MSS. 32912, ff. 301-2.

about the "independence" of the county and the rights of its freeholders, they did not refer to the right of tenants to make their own choice between candidates, but almost invariably signified a conflict between the rank and file of the country gentlemen and some large aristocratic influence.¹ Broadly speaking, in the south-west and west of England and in many of the Midland counties the country gentry were dominant—in Cornwall, Devonshire, Somerset, Dorset, and Wiltshire, practically to the exclusion of all aristocratic influence; with one single exception, no son of a peer ever represented any of these five counties between 1707 and 1801.² In Somerset the minor gentry are said to have gone so far "as to pledge themselves not to vote for the brother or son of a peer . . . or for a candidate whom a peer supported"³—"the lords . . . I heate the very name of *themmun*", declared Squire Western.⁴ In the eastern counties and in the north the big aristocratic houses had a very considerable say in county elections.

¹ This conflict sometimes coincided with a division between Tories and Whigs, but by no means always, perhaps not even in the majority of cases. I refrain in this essay from entering into a discussion of the two parties, their nature, and how far they still survived in 1760. I reserve this subject for a further volume, and only incidentally touch upon it in this book.

² Even this one exception, which has to be mentioned for the sake of formal accuracy, does not run counter to the rule: it occurred merely because the father of George Pitt, M.P. for Dorset, was in 1776 created Lord Rivers. But the Pitts were one of the most typical west-country gentry families. In Wiltshire on two occasions the Herberts of Wilton, one of the oldest aristocratic families in the county, contested its representation against the Goddards of Swindon, typical country gentlemen. Each time the hue and cry was raised by the country gentry against the Pembroke family, and the Goddard was returned, in 1722 apparently without a poll (about that election see "The Diary of Thomas Smith", in the *Wilts Archaeol. Mag.* vol. xi.), in 1772 after a battle royal fought out to the bitter end.

³ See F. Harrison, "The Great Election Contest in Wiltshire in 1772", *Wiltshire Notes and Queries*, March 1906, p. 229.

⁴ Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones*, book vi. ch. ii.

But even where a territorial magnate or a combination "of the great men of the county" were able to exert a dominant influence in elections, they had to be extremely careful not to excite the jealousy of the country gentlemen. Hardly ever was an attempt made in a county to fill both seats with members of the same family,¹ which, it might have been said, would in appearance have degraded it to the level of a pocket borough. It seldom happened even that both seats were filled by sons of peers; as a rule, a country gentleman of smaller rank was joined to the aristocratic candidate. Sometimes the aristocratic "connexion" was able to select the country gentleman, but more often they had to leave the choice to the general meeting of the county. Any appearance of "dictating" was apt to provoke resentment and opposition.

In 1753, Philip Yorke, having been requested by the Duke of Bedford to propose Lord Upper Ossory for Bedfordshire, asked his father, Lord Hardwicke, whether in his speech he should pay any compliment to the Duke, on whose interest Lord Upper Ossory was standing; Lord Hardwicke replied that he should not even mention the Duke in his speech:

... things of that kind are apt not to be well taken by the gentlemen of the country. It seems to suppose an influence from such great families, which is not popular to hint to them. The old Lord Onslow (*Stiff Dick*) us'd allways to talk to the Surrey gentlemen as if he was nothing, and it was their interest and support only that he relied upon, which took with them extremely. . . .²

During the great Oxfordshire election of 1754 the number of peers on the Whig side (the Duke of Marlborough and Lords Harcourt, Guilford, and Macclesfield) was a

¹ Between 1761 and 1784 there were only two such cases: two Foleys, father and son, represented Herefordshire, 1768-74, and two Hills, rather distant cousins, represented Shropshire, 1780-84.

² Lord Hardwicke to Philip Yorke, July 24, 1753; Add. MSS. 35351, ff. 239-40.

favourite taunt of the Tory country gentlemen against their opponents, and Oxfordshire became a byword in the West Country. " 'Tis said, Ld. Weymouth has declared an opposition for this county [Wilts"]", wrote Miss Frances Ernle to her cousin Mrs. Legh on October 16, 1756. " Mr. Thyn is to be the person so that everybody begins to look about them, these are early days and they do not intend to Oxfordshire us, do they ? " ¹

Lord Rockingham, writing to Newcastle on January 24, 1761, about his success in arranging matters in Yorkshire, was proud of the cry of aristocratic influence having proved ineffective against him :

. . . I have experienced by it that the friendships, which many do me the honour to bear towards me in this county, is *proof* against the clamour that was attempted to be raised personally against me, as desiring to dictate to the county, and which cry tho' your Grace knows the principles and independency of Yorkshire gentlemen, did not affect the decision of any one person, whom I ever reckoned my friend. . . . ²

In County Durham the Bishop Palatine and the Earl of Darlington, when united, had an exceptionally powerful territorial interest. None the less, to secure one seat to Lord Darlington they had " as to the other to follow, not to force, the bent of the county " ; ³ and at the by-election in 1760 the Bishop, to avoid " the envy and jealousies " that would have attended an early pronouncement on his part, waited to " feel the pulse " of the county, and therefore refused to declare for any candidate before the general meeting. ⁴

¹ MSS. in the possession of Mr. Roger Ernle Money-Kyrle, of Whetham, Wiltshire, to whom my best thanks are due for his permission to use them.

² Add. MSS. 32918, f. 47.

³ Lord Mansfield to the Duke of Newcastle, September 29, 1760 ; Add. MSS. 32912, ff. 227-8.

⁴ Richard Trevor, Bishop of Durham, to the Duke of Newcastle, October 2, 1760 ; Add. MSS. 32912, ff. 303-4.

The Duke of Northumberland declared in 1774 that if the gentlemen of the county "would do him the honour to support his son, he would coincide with the sense of the county in the choice of the other member". No agreement was, however, reached at the general meeting at Morpeth on July 26, and Lord Algernon Percy and Sir John Hussey Delaval were put up by the Duke of Northumberland, supported by the Duke of Portland and Lords Carlisle, Ravensworth, and Tankerville, whilst Sir William Middleton and Mr. William Fenwick became the candidates of the country gentlemen led by Sir Henry Grey of Howick (but supported also by the Earls of Strathmore and Scarborough). In the numerous pamphlets and handbills published during that contest,¹ on the very eve of the American Revolution, America is hardly mentioned, and even home politics take a second place; the main question before the electorate was whether or not the Duke of Northumberland had kept his promise to accept the "sense of the county" as to the second member. The result of the election was characteristic: Lord Algernon Percy and Sir William Middleton were returned—the contest was obviously decided by the vote of those who wished to be fair to both sides and were not committed to either, and the compliment of one seat was made to the House of Alnwick, whilst the right of the country gentry to the other was successfully vindicated.

To sum up: the landed gentry was the deciding element in most county elections, though a certain number of seats were conceded by them to the great noble houses—in 1761, 16 out of 80 knights of the shires were sons of peers and nine of them courtesy lords; of the remaining 64, 62 were country gentlemen. The electorate in the counties formed an independent and fairly large class; still, it would be ludicrous to talk of any kind of "democracy" in 39 out

¹ They were republished in the *Complete Collection of all the Papers which have appeared from the different Parties in the present Contest for Members for the County of Northumberland* (1774).

of 40 counties. Taking England as a whole, probably not more than one in every twenty voters at county elections could freely exercise his statutory rights, and the county Members, though a valuable element in the House in that most of them were independent of the Government, constituted the purest type of class representation in Great Britain, to a high degree, of an hereditary character. Of no less than 30 among the 80 knights of the shires returned in 1761, the fathers had previously represented the same counties, while another 19 had been preceded by more distant ancestors in the direct male line ; together 49 out of 80 can be said to have inherited their seats. Of another 20, ancestors in the direct male line had sat in Parliament, though for different constituencies, and only 11 were without Parliamentary ancestry in the male line from which a title could have descended to them without special remainder. These eleven included the two Members for Middlesex and three Members for Berkshire, Bedfordshire, and Suffolk, whose families had risen through the City or the law.

THE PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHES

The books on English Parliamentary boroughs published by T. H. B. Oldfield between 1792 and 1820 are a mine worked by generations of historians, with little or no attempt on their part to refine the ore. Oldfield was one of the many West Country attorneys deeply engaged in election business ;¹ his knowledge of the

¹ Comparatively little is known about him ; the article in the *Dictionary of National Biography* adds the date of his death to the information contained in the British Museum catalogue. In the debate on the disfranchisement of East Retford on June 11, 1827, Mr. Tennyson mentioned Oldfield as having been "employed at Retford by one of the parties in the election of 1812" (*Hansard*, new series, vol. xvii. column 1209-10). But the assertion made by Mr. Porritt in his *Unreformed House of Commons* (vol. i. p. 338) that Oldfield him-

subject was both detailed and extensive, and the record he has left of it is unique. But he was a zealous Parliamentary reformer, and his works had a propagandist bias and a purpose. He was out to expose the absurdities of the system and its corruption: it was not for him to show how practice softened and modified them. The picture he gives is at the best an X-ray photograph, and not a portrait.

Mr. Edward Porritt's book on the *Unreformed House of Commons* is the one outstanding piece of modern comprehensive research into the subject; it is unbiassed and scholarly, and there is no need to do once more the work in so far as Mr. Porritt has done it. Whoever wishes for detailed information concerning the legal and technical

self was a dealer in boroughs, seems to rest on very slender evidence. In the debate on the borough of Penryn, May 8, 1827, Mr. Alderman Waithman is thus reported in *Hansard*: "He himself knew a borough agent who often had fifteen or twenty candidates for boroughs, or their agents at his table. There was one person in the city who must be well known to the leading Members of that House—he meant Mr. Oldfield—who frequently entertained more than twenty attorneys, each of whom introduced some stranger for the representation of a borough in Cornwall" (*ibid.* column 693). Mr. Porritt identifies the "borough agent" mentioned in the first sentence with the Oldfield mentioned in the second, and that Oldfield with T. H. B. Oldfield. The first identification seems uncertain, the latter would seem plausible; still, if Waithman is correctly reported and used the proper tenses, it would appear from his remarks that the Oldfield he meant was alive in 1827, whereas T. H. B. Oldfield is stated to have died in 1822. But it is not at all certain what it was that Waithman said—a very different report of his speech appeared in *The Times* of May 9, 1827: "There was what he might call a regular market for borough-seats, at the commencement of every Parliament. This was clearly shown by Mr. Oldfield, the individual who has given the public *The History of Boroughs*. It was well known that at a dinner-party of borough electors, the agent would introduce to them an individual . . . of whom the electors knew nothing." No connexion whatsoever is indicated here between Oldfield and the agent who introduced the candidate—in short, the above evidence is not sufficiently clear to conclude that Oldfield the reformer was a professional dealer in boroughs.

aspects of the system, which remained practically unchanged from 1660 to 1832, will find it in his book. But covering centuries, it deals with the constant rather than with the changing elements, and cannot reproduce the colour of any single period.

Although there was an infinite variety of franchises in the English boroughs, broadly speaking, they can be divided into five types. There were boroughs (1) with what practically amounted to universal franchise; (2) where the franchise was in those paying "scot and lot"; (3) where the vote was in the "freemen"; (4) where the franchise was limited to the Corporation; (5) where the franchise was attached to certain houses or plots of ground called burgages. The "freemen" boroughs were the most numerous—about eighty; those with an almost universal franchise were few—about a dozen; the remaining boroughs (about one hundred and ten) were almost equally divided among the remaining three groups.¹

The numbers for each category are here but roughly indicated, as no two of the best authorities fully agree in their calculations. There were various mixed forms which lend themselves to different classifications. Moreover, the nature of the particular franchises in quite a number of boroughs continued to be contested until they were all swept away by the Reform Act of 1832. To give but one example: Pontefract in 1761 was a burgage borough, and the House of Commons confirmed this franchise by its determination of 1770; but in 1791 it reversed its decision and vested the right of election in the inhabitants resident.²

But the franchise alone, though it broadly suggests the

¹ I follow here in a general way the account of the franchise given in E. Halévy, *A History of the English People in 1815* (pp. 113-30), though I do not adhere to it in every detail.

² See on Pontefract, Simon Fraser, *Reports of the Proceedings before Select Committees of the House of Commons in . . . controverted Elections* (1791), pp. 180-262.

character of a borough, did not necessarily determine it ; it is obvious, e.g., that where votes were attached to certain lands or houses, whoever held a majority of such burgages (which were seldom more than 200, and at Old Sarum as few as seven) had the borough and its representation in his pocket. The burgage franchise therefore suggests private ownership, and this, in fact, was by 1760 the state of most burgage boroughs, but by no means of all (see, e.g., the Chippenham election of 1818). On the other hand, private property in representation could be established even in a borough with a very wide franchise, but without inhabitants, where "a single person . . . keeps a few wretched inhabitants to return whoever he dictates to them".¹ Oldfield quotes Gatton as an example, where the franchise was wide but the borough consisted "of only six houses"; and, according to Brayley, in the reign of Henry VIII Sir Roger Copley described himself as its "burgess and only inhabitant".²

A classification by the size of the electorate gives, perhaps, a better idea of Parliamentary boroughs than any analysis by franchises, though even this must not be made the basis for sweeping generalisations. Whilst burgage boroughs were predestined to become pocket boroughs, narrow corporations offered a favourable field *for the operations of the Government and of rich men* willing to negotiate and to pay. Still, occasionally a narrow corporation in a flourishing, self-respecting town acted a very different part. At Bath the Corporation counted 32 members; but in 1761 it elected William Pitt and Field-Marshal Lord Ligonier, than whom no one was less likely to engage in the usual election practices. The Corporation at Devizes consisted of 38 members, but in 1761, on a canvass, 26 electors promised their votes to the old Recorder of the borough, John Garth, a man of small means but high

¹ Oldfield, *Key to the House of Commons* (1820), p. 63.

² *History of Surrey*, vol. iv. p. 92.

AT THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE III

standing in the town, and only eight to Thomas Fludyer, a brother and partner of Sir Samuel Fludyer, Bart., M.P., one of the richest men in England.¹ At Bedford, on the other hand, where the right of election was in the freemen and burgesses and in householders not receiving alms, there were in 1774 about 1000 voters, which would make it seem a free and popular borough. But there the Corporation had an unlimited power to create even non-resident freemen, and in 1769 Sir Robert Bernard, a rich Huntingdonshire squire and a pillar of the ultra-radical Bill of Rights Society, having wrested the control of the Corporation from the Duke of Bedford, made some 500 new freemen, mostly among his Huntingdonshire tenants or neighbours; and he added another few hundred in the course of the next twenty years. In 1789 the Duke of Bedford succeeded him as Recorder of the town, and in turn got 350 freemen created mainly from among "his own tenants or tradesmen, or the tenants and tradesmen of other persons attached to him in politics".²

Nor did even the largest electorates preclude bribery—drink and a few guineas for each voter taking the place of substantial payments and petty offices for a local oligarchy. Gloucester, where, in 1761, 1500 voters went to the poll, can serve as example. George Selwyn, who represented it from 1754 till 1780, wrote to Lord Holland on March 19, 1761 :

Two of my voters were murdered yesterday by an experiment which we call shopping, that is, locking them up and keeping them

¹ See letter from Charles Garth (the eldest son of John Garth) to the Duke of Newcastle, February 9, 1762; Add. MSS. 32934, ff. 243-4.

² See Thomas A. Blyth, *History of Bedford*, p. 113; also Dodsley's *Annual Register*, 1769, under date of September 4, p. 128; and T. W. Pearse, *Observations on the Schedule of the Records and other Documents of the Corporation of Bedford* (1876). "In 1780, Sir Robert Bernard lent the Corporation £950, and it may be assumed that the loan was not entirely unconnected with this last admission of freemen . . ." (Pearse, p. 11).

dead drunk to the day of election. Mr. Snell's agents forced two single Selwyns into a post chaise, where, being suffocated with the brandy that was given them and a very fat man that had the custody of them, they were taken out stone dead. Here follows a hanging; in short, it is one roundeau of delights.¹

And that Selwyn, who was inclined to embroider his stories, did not add very much on this occasion, is proved by an account of the incident transmitted to the Duke of Newcastle by Dr. Henry Gally, a famous scholar and Prebendary of Gloucester.²

¹ See the Earl of Ilchester, *Letters to Henry Fox, Lord Holland*, p. 145. Selwyn's passion for witnessing executions was a standing joke among his friends.

² "The friends of Mr. Barrow and Mr. Selwyn, being informed that Mr. Snell's agents had been decoying several of the freemen of this city into public houses where they were made drunk and then sent out of town in order to prevent their voting at the next election, were obliged to desire yesterday several of the lower class of people to keep together at the New Inn, a public house in this city, but one Matthews, an inn-keeper, having a most enterprizing genius, raised a ladder against one of the windows, got into the house, and took one Pace, a freeman (in the interest of Mr. Barrow and Mr. Selwyn), out of his bed and got him out of the window, and having also by the assistance of one Peyton, a watchmaker in this city, got another freeman, one Clifford, into their custody, they drenched them well with spiritous and strong liquors and put them into a post chaise and last night very late attended them to a house belonging to Mr. Snell's son at Coldthrop about four miles off, but when they opened the chaise door the two persons therein were found to be quite dead. . . . There are now several other persons seized and confined in places unknown which they call shopping . . . so that the agents of Mr. Barrow and Mr. Selwyn are obliged to keep constant guard to prevent these kidnapping attempts which are carried on in defiance of all authority and with the utmost insolence and audacity" (Add. MSS. 32921, f. 22). For Dr. H. Gally, see *Dictionary of National Biography*, and *Nichols's Literary Anecdotes*, vol. ii. p. 274; also in the Newcastle MSS. numerous letters to the Duke begging for Church preferments as reward for his election services. About the above incident, see also *The London Chronicle*, March 21-4, 1761: ". . . last night, in picking up and sending away drunken men, Mr. ——— effectually lost two voices, for they were actually suffocated in a chaise as they were carried off."

A treatise on the management of freemen in a populous borough is supplied in the beautifully detailed and systematic instructions which John Calcraft issued to his agents at Rochester previous to the general election of 1768 :¹

These instructions must be thoroughly attended to, the proper persons and places pitch'd and a plan laid accordingly—

To fix the names of half a dozen or more stout freemen, to attend the barr, to make room for our friends to poll easily, and constantly; if possible, to keep the possession of the barr.

To fix on persons who are to attend each house where freemen are, from Sunday evening till the time of polling, and they to keep constantly at those houses, and never stirr out of them till the election is finished ; except it be to poll themselves.

To fix on about half a dozen active persons (whether freemen or not) to conduct about 12 or 14 freemen at a time from the houses where they are kept, to the polling place, with directions to see them all polled before they leave them. And let the house managers alwaies deliver out those freemen first, whom they think most doubtfull, and endeavour as much as may be to keep them sober till they have polled.

¹ The MS. is in the possession of Mr. C. C. D. Ryder, the present owner of Rempstone Hall (Calcrafft's estate in Dorset), and my best thanks are due to him for having given me permission to publish it. The document is not dated, and the borough which it concerns is not named. My reasons for referring it to the Rochester election of 1768 are these : John Calcraft was concerned in the boroughs of Rochester, Poole, Wareham, and Corfe Castle. He gave up his attempts at capturing Corfe Castle without ever fighting an election, and amicably carried his claims at Wareham : while at Poole, where his candidate had to meet an opposition, the total electorate consisted only of about a hundred burgesses—they were too few to require methods such as described in the instructions, and moreover were not "freemen". But Rochester was a "freemen" borough with an electorate of over 500, and Calcraft fought in it two hotly contested elections, in 1765 and 1768. Calcraft's paper specially mentions the instructions to be given "to every person employed in any office", which seems to indicate that on that occasion he had the support of the Government ; this was the case in 1768, but not in 1765, when he stood in opposition to Grey Cooper, the Secretary to the Treasury.

To endeavour as much as may be alwaies to keep a head of the poll.

By no means to make a parade with the freemen the morning of the election, hut to get them as soon as may be, into your private houses, and keep them there till they are poled : to prevent the other side geting away any straglers.

To have some sensible persons, to go about the town, and the poll house, and to the houses of entertainment of the other side, to get away any drunken, or stragling freemen, and to talk with them properly, and poll them immediately, or carry them to our private houses to be conducted from thence to poll.

To every person employed in any office, to have his instructions in writing what part he is to take and desired strictly to adhere to it as a great deal will depend upon conduct and good management.

Towards the close of the poll to spare no expense that may seem necessary.

Between this time and the election get what doubtful persons you can into your private houses and entertain them there till the election comes on.

Thus neither the franchise nor the size of the electorate gives absolutely reliable indication of its character. Still, one may say with Aristotle, " the many are more incorruptible than the few " ; and with an election agent of the Duke of Newcastle's, " it's not in the power of any single person, let his weight be what it will ", to determine the mood of " sixteen or seventeen hundred English electors ".¹ The large constituencies opened a field for mass movements, clean and unclean ; the small electorates, for quiet corruption and for loyalties, sometimes fine, and sometimes of a very peculiar character.

In 1761 only 22 of the 204 English boroughs had an electorate of over 1000. In the " southern division " there were : Westminster with about 9000, the City of London with about 6000, and Southwark with about 1500 voters ; Bristol with 5000, and Exeter, Canterbury, and Colchester

¹ J. S. Charlton, M.P., to the Duke of Newcastle, August 1, 1753, in reference to Nottingham ; Add. MSS. 32732, f. 393.

with something over 1000 each. Thus of the 261 Members returned by the 130 urban constituencies in the south, 16 only, *i.e.* about 6 per cent, had an electorate exceeding 1000. In the rest of England, north of the Thames and of the wider London area, the total number of boroughs was much smaller—74 returning 144 Members—and the corruption both of franchises and electorates was, on the whole, less advanced.¹ Fifteen of its boroughs had an electorate of over 1000,² and their Members formed more than 20 per cent of its borough representation. Together, the 46 representatives of English boroughs with an electorate of over 1000 formed almost 11½ per cent of its urban representation.

Next came, in 1761, 22 boroughs with an electorate of 500 to 1000; 13 in the “northern” division³ (18 per cent of its borough representation), and only 9 in the “southern” division (7 per cent).⁴ Moreover, of the boroughs in the northern group four nearly reached the 1000 line (Oxford, Yarmouth, Lincoln, and Beverley), whilst three of the southern boroughs with an electorate of between 500-1000—Honiton, Reading, and Sudbury—ranked among the most notoriously corrupt in England. Lastly, there were 11 boroughs with about 500 voters, seven in the “southern”⁵ and four in the “northern” division.⁶

Thus in the whole of England only 112 out of 405

¹ In Yorkshire there were, however, eight absolute pocket boroughs, and two in Lancashire.

² Norwich had nearly 3000 voters, Leicester, Nottingham, York, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Liverpool, Lancaster, and Worcester about 2000 each; Chester, Gloucester, and Coventry about 1500; Durham, Hull, Bridgnorth, and Northampton over 1000 each.

³ Carlisle, Derby, Cirencester, Hereford, Preston, Grantham, Lincoln, Yarmouth (Norfolk), Newark, Oxford, Lichfield, Evesham, and Beverley.

⁴ Bedford, Reading, Honiton, Maldon, St. Albans, Maidstone, Ipswich, Sudbury, and Dover.

⁵ Aylesbury, Wareham, Hertford, Rochester, Taunton, Chichester, and Sandwich.

⁶ Stamford, Peterborough, Berwick, and Newcastle-under-Lyne.

borough representatives, *i.e.* almost 28 per cent, were returned by electorates of 500 or above ; in the northern division nearly $44\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, in the southern nearly $18\frac{1}{2}$. Of the remaining 149 urban constituencies the majority consisted of "close", "rotten", or pocket boroughs, and as mentioned above, these were most conspicuous in the south. None of the 21 Cornish boroughs had an electorate of more than 200 ; five of the eight Cinque Ports had less than 40 voters each ; of the 16 Wiltshire boroughs none had more than 300 voters, and among the 12 Hampshire boroughs Southampton was the largest with about 400 voters ; in Surrey and Sussex 28 out of 30 boroughs had less than 200 voters.

Though in most cases I put the number of voters higher than was done by "the Committee appointed to report upon the State of Representation in England and Wales" (1792), the total figure which I get for the electorate of the 204 Parliamentary cities and boroughs in England in 1761 is about 85,000 ; 110 of the borough representatives of England were elected by 70,000, and 295 by 15,000 voters. The authors of the "Report", believing that a sensible electoral system would mean sensible elections, wrote what on their premise is obvious common sense :

If three persons be chosen by 30, and two by 4970, though undoubted the five are chosen by 5000, still it will hardly be contended that such a distribution of the electors does not effectually take away every advantage of popular representation.¹

It is certain that big popular constituencies had to be dealt with differently from rotten boroughs ; it is equally certain that, given the existence of rotten boroughs, different types of men were attracted by the different types of constituencies. A nabob such as Governor Watts of Bengal fame, when offered a middle-sized borough, Ipswich, with an electorate of about 700, replied

¹ P. 7.

that he was "quite unfit for a bustle", but always ready with his money "where no kind of opposition can be";¹ and James West, a hard-worked civil servant, after the hurry of a contested election at St. Albans (with over 500 voters), remarked to the Duke of Newcastle in 1761 that "a Secretary of the Treasury should not stand hereafter for a populous borough, within 20 miles of London".² On the other hand, Edward Bacon in 1756, William Fitzherbert in 1762, and Sir Thomas Clavering in 1760, resigned their seats in rotten boroughs to stand for the populous towns of Norwich and Derby and the county of Durham, with which they were connected.

Still, had none of the boroughs been of the decayed or close type, would the ultimate result have been fundamentally different? Was not the root of the evil in the mentality of the age and the customs of the time, even more than in inherited or distorted franchises? Naturally there must have been interaction; but perhaps what made people endure the system at all, was the fact that at that time there was no vast difference in outlook and morals between the populous cities and the rotten boroughs, and between the Members returned by the two. There is wisdom in Anatole France's favourite thesis that a country at any one time is capable of developing only one type of government; and Soame Jenyns, who had sat in Parliament from 1741 till 1780, in his *Thoughts on a Parliamentary Reform*, published in 1784, forestalled to some extent Anatole France:

Different modes of election may make some difference in the trouble and expence of the candidates, and may differently affect the morals of the people, and the peace of the country, but will make no

¹ Gov. William Watts to James West, October 19, 1759; Add. MSS. 32897, f. 263. About him see my article on "Brice Fisher" in the *English Historical Review*, October 1927.

² James West to the Duke of Newcastle, March 23, 1761; Add. MSS. 32921, f. 16.

difference in the representative body when brought together, and it is of little signification by what means they come there : the majority of any legislative assembly, consisting of 550 members, in the same circumstances and situation, will infallibly act in the same manner.¹

This statement, though perhaps too sweeping, contains substantial truth.

Boroughs with over 1000 Voters

The first distinctive feature of the larger cities and boroughs was the frequency of election contests in them, carried through to the bitter end. Of the 22 towns with over 1000 voters no less than eleven went to the poll in 1761 ; of the 22 towns with 500-1000 voters, twelve ; whilst of the remaining 202 English constituencies only 18 ; *i.e.* more than half of the larger boroughs were contested, and less than one in eleven of all the other constituencies. Like the counties, the large urban electorates could not be dominated easily and completely by a single interest, but differed from them in having a less homogeneous electorate, which made election calculations and agreements more difficult ; moreover, contests in them, though very expensive, were not quite so ruinous as in the counties.

The second outstanding feature was that none of the 22 largest towns could be converted into a Government borough. Not that the Government interest did not count ; every vote counted—*e.g.* a by-election at Southwark in 1743 was carried by a majority of 41 on a poll of 1655, and at Bristol in 1756 by 71 on a poll of 4765 ; and as the “ natural history ” of every voter was known, each received consideration. But the “ interest ” of the Government was only one among many in these boroughs, and, as in the counties, it had to add its mite to the fund of this or that powerful candidate. It could not run official candidates of its own, *i.e.* servants of the Crown in the strictest sense of the term.

¹ Pp. 15-16.

In the absence of any one absolutely dominant interest, private or official, one never meets the "yellow dog" among the representatives of these 22 towns. Even where there was a strong territorial interest, it had to be exercised by its holders in their own favour and could hardly ever have been assigned or transferred to outsiders. Among the 46 Members of these towns in 1761 only two could be described as outsiders, Henry Crabb Boulton and John Walsh, Members for Worcester, "East Indians" who captured a very corrupt borough entirely by their own strength and efforts. Another peculiarity of the big boroughs was that, as in the counties, both seats could seldom be filled by members of the same family, though this happened occasionally in the feudal north, *e.g.* at Chester and Bridgnorth.

But should anyone expect to find in the 46 representatives of the big trading and manufacturing towns typical members of the middle classes, he will be disappointed. In 1761 eight were sons of peers, and, on the severest scrutiny, excluding amphibious types, a further 24 were country gentlemen. In fact, only seven out of the 46 were actually engaged in trade: the four Members for the City of London, the two Members for Southwark, and one Member for Liverpool. In the City of London it was a time-honoured tradition to elect leading merchants, men who had held City office and distinguished themselves in its municipal life. Besides the City of London, Southwark alone seems by preference to have chosen local manufacturers, merchants, and bankers; all its Members between 1761 and 1784 come under this description: Alexander Hume (1743-54 and 1761-65), a merchant and a Director of the East India Company; Joseph Mawbey (1761-74), a Vauxhall distiller; Henry Thrale (1765-80)—the friend of Samuel Johnson—a Southwark brewer; Nathaniel Polhill (1774-82), an "eminent tobacco merchant" at Southwark and subsequently a banker; Sir

Richard Hotham (1780-84), a Southwark hatter, subsequently an East India shipper and merchant; and Henry Thornton (1782-1815), a banker—one of the leaders of the “Clapham sect”.

The two great out-ports, Bristol and Liverpool, usually returned some of their own merchants to Parliament, but the tradition with them was less strict than in the City of London or in Southwark, and in 1761 Sir Ellis Cunliffe, M.P. for Liverpool, was their only merchant representative.

Outside these four cities one would search in vain in 1761 for big business men returned by populous urban constituencies (it is only about 1780 that a stronger tendency becomes noticeable in that direction).¹ Whatever traditions there were, worked in favour of the neighbouring nobility and gentry, who also as patrons, customers, and landlords were more important than the local merchants or manufacturers; whilst the local bankers, though rising in importance, hardly as yet aspired to seats in the House of Commons. Nor did London merchants, when in search of seats, go to populous, expensive constituencies where they were strangers; they preferred to buy them outright in pocket boroughs, or to cultivate an “interest” in some small, manageable corporation. In so far as local candidates were returned by the big provincial towns in 1761 they were mostly lawyers, often closely connected with the trade of their constituencies. There was Jarrit Smith, M.P. for Bristol, a local attorney deeply

¹ Both Members returned for Bristol in 1780 are local merchants, Brickdale and Lippincot; one at Exeter, J. Baring; one at Canterbury, G. Gipps; adding the four Members for London and the two for Southwark, ten out of the sixteen in the southern division were local merchants or manufacturers. In the northern division: J. Darker at Leicester; Robert Smith at Nottingham; H. Rawlinson at Liverpool; John Webb at Gloucester; T. Rogers at Coventry. This makes five out of thirty in the northern division, where all movement, whether towards corruption or reform, was slower.

engaged in the commercial concerns of the city ; Matthew Ridley, M.P. for Newcastle-on-Tyne, a barrister, senior alderman in the borough, several times its mayor, and Governor of its Company of Merchant-Adventurers ; James Hewit, M.P. for Coventry (where his father had been a merchant and mayor of the city), a distinguished barrister ; Charles Gray, M.P. for Colchester and Recorder for Ipswich. If we add two representatives of old town families, John Plumtre, M.P. for Nottingham, and Martin Rebow, M.P. for Colchester (a descendant of Flemish " Confessors " who had been eminent cloth merchants in the town), we have exhausted the number of those who did not primarily belong to the landed interest.¹ British democracy, unless directed by party or professional organisations, has a preference for the " well-born ", and in the largest, most democratic, most hotly contested urban constituency, the City of Westminster, after radicalism had arisen, society radicals were pitched against society men. In 1761 Westminster returned without contest Lord Pulteney, son of Lord Bath, and General Edward Cornwallis, son of the fourth Lord Cornwallis ; and in 1762, when Cornwallis's seat was vacated by his being appointed Governor of Gibraltar, the Duke of Newcastle was not certain at first whether the son of Lord Sandys was " of dignity enough " ² to represent Westminster. In fact, outside the City of London and Southwark, where self-made men were covered by a corporate or local tradition, and Worcester, which was thoroughly corrupt, there was not one among the 46 representatives returned in 1761 by the 22 English towns

¹ This list, which includes 7 merchants, 4 lawyers, and 2 town notables, makes a total of 13 ; adding the 2 " East Indians " at Worcester—15. But 8 sons of peers and 24 country gentlemen were mentioned above. The apparent discrepancy (there should be only 46) is due to one merchant Member for the City of London, Thomas Harley, the son of the third Earl of Oxford, appearing twice.

² The Duke of Newcastle to the Duke of Bedford. April 8. 1762 : Add. MSS. 32936, f. 432.

with electorates of over 1000, who comes under this description (in saying this I omit lawyers, who had a peculiar status of their own). Rotten boroughs were far kinder and more hospitable to self-made men than the votes and choice of British democracy.

Still, in spite of the predilection which even these large urban constituencies showed for men of high rank and birth, heredity in their representation was less marked than either in the counties or in the smaller boroughs, the influence of single families being as a rule much weaker, especially in the south. Twenty-one among the 46 Members in 1761 were the first in their families to enter the British Parliament: three Members for the City of London, the Members for Southwark, Bristol, and Liverpool, the two "East Indians" at Worcester, the four lawyers,¹ and lastly a few country gentlemen. Of the 25 with Parliamentary ancestry, 11 sat for boroughs which their fathers had represented before them, and three succeeded near relatives. There was a marked difference in the degree of continuity and heredity in representation between the north, the midlands, and the south.² In the conservative north the franchise was usually wider and the electorates were less corrupt, but a quasi-feudal tradition prevailed, and the hold of the landed classes even on the big, populous boroughs was remarkable—indeed, in some of them it survived the Reform Act of 1832. The Grosvenors sat for Chester city without a single break from 1715 till 1874, and during 42 of these 159 years held even both seats. Similarly, the city of Durham was represented by the Tempest family from 1742 till 1794, when it became extinct in the male line, and by the Lambtons from 1734 till 1813, when they transferred themselves to the county. At Newcastle-on-Tyne, Matthew Ridley, who was the first of his family to represent the borough and sat for it from

¹ This includes J. Smith, M.P. for Bristol, once more.

² I depart here from my usual classification.

1747 till 1774, was succeeded in the representation of the town by his son and grandson, the three together holding one seat in it for almost a century (1747-1836). The remarkable case of the Whitmores at Bridgnorth, where they held at least one seat without break from 1661 till 1870, is discussed at greater length in the essay on Shropshire.

In the midlands and the south not a single case of long *uninterrupted* tenure can be found in any of the large urban constituencies. The father of John Rolle Walter, who represented Exeter 1754-66, had sat for the city 1713-15 and 1722-27. The father and grandfather of George Selwyn had from 1728 to 1751 represented Gloucester, for which he sat 1754-80. Samuel Milles, the grandfather of Richard Milles, M.P. for Canterbury 1761-80, had represented the borough 1722-27. Edward Bacon, M.P. for Norwich 1756-84, occupied the seat held by his father 1705-10 and 1715-35. Colchester was represented by the Rebow family 1688-1713, 1715-23, 1734-35, 1754-81, and again 1857-59 and 1865-70. At Northampton five Montagus (of the Halifax branch) represented the town for 34 years between 1707 and 1768, whilst the Comptons sat for it for about fifty years between 1720 and 1820. These are typical examples. There was heredity, but no unbroken descent; for there was usually more than one noble or prominent family to choose from, and there was no absolute attachment. And in London, Southwark, and Bristol there was no heredity of any kind.

It seems advisable to analyse the political state of a few of these 22 large city constituencies with a view to obtaining a picture of English "urban democracy" about 1760.¹

¹ I omit the City of London and Westminster, partly because it would be a task exceeding the limits of short sketches, and partly because conditions in them were unique, and no franchise in the

Bristol.—The politics of Bristol, the second largest city in Great Britain, were managed by the "Union Club" for the Whigs and the "Steadfast Society" for the Tories. On the eve of the general election of 1754 the Whigs approached the Tories with the suggestion to establish "that harmony which becomes fellow citizens, and reciprocally to elect Members who may be willing and capable of serving us", and thus to concur "for the peace of the city".¹ The Tories refused, and put up two candidates; the Whigs, however, to show that they "did not seek for victory but independence",² nominated only one (Robert Nugent) and carried his election; and according to Dean Tucker, "there was no one thing which contributed to the success of our cause so much as our continual insisting upon the ill behaviour of the Tories in rejecting the compromise".³ He thus described the circumstances of Nugent's nomination:

Before Mr. Nugent, now Lord Viscount Clare, was chosen to represent the City of Bristol, it was a general complaint among the citizens, that they had not a friend to whom they could apply for obtaining any favour from the great officers of State:—That a commercial city, such as theirs, stood in continual need of the interposition and assistance sometimes of the Treasury, sometimes of the Board of Trade, and sometimes of the Commissioners of the Customs, and the Excise, &c., &c., to moderate and mitigate the *letter* of the law in contingent cases:—That, more especially during the time of war, they were subject to great distress for want of regular convoys, and of other beneficial protections:—And lastly, that in the disposal of Government-places, belonging to their port and city, it was hard and grating to them to see such numbers of

eighteenth century could have reproduced them elsewhere; whilst the idea of subdividing boroughs into multiple constituencies had not yet arisen.

¹ Mr. Towgood to the Earl of Berkeley, Bristol, July 3, 1753; Add. MSS. 32732, f. 235.

² Josiah Tucker, *Review of Lord Clare's Conduct* (1775), p. 5.

³ Dean Tucker to Lord Hardwicke, March 13, 1756; Add. MSS. 35692, ff. 130-31.

strangers preferred, whilst several of their own tradesmen, reduced by misfortunes, wanted bread.¹

Here then was the third largest urban constituency² in Great Britain no less solicitous of Government favours than some poor, decayed borough. Edmund Burke was yet to learn by experience how much freer an Opposition Member was when sitting for some Lordship's pocket borough than as a representative of Bristol. On June 26, 1777, he wrote to his friend Richard Champion :

Until I knew it, both by my own particular experience, and by my observation of what happened to others, I could not have believed how very little the local constituents attend to the general public line of conduct observed by their member. They judge of him solely by his merits as their special agent. . . . It is . . . unlucky for the public, that this indifference to the main lines of the duty of a member of parliament should be so prevalent among the electors. For almost all small services to individuals, and even to corporations, depend so much on the pleasure of the crown, that the members are as it were driven headlong into dependence by those whom the constitution, and (one would at first imagine) the very nature of things, had contrived to keep independent of a court influence. This alone is sufficient to show how much a constitution *in fact* differs from a constitution *on paper*.³

Even the wider commercial politics of Bristol bore a strongly local imprint. One of the things which had specially recommended Nugent to Bristol in 1754 was that he had proved "a continual and a successful advocate for the out-ports, when their own members remained silent,

¹ Josiah Tucker, *Review of Lord Clare's Conduct* (1775), p. 1. After Nugent had been elected for Bristol, during the twenty years he continued to represent them, he "was intrusted with the nomination to every place and employment in the disposal of Government within the City of Bristol" (*ibid.* p. 16).

² To reassure captious critics: I am quite aware that I have called Bristol "the second largest city"; as a city it was larger than Westminster, but it had a smaller electorate.

³ *Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 166.

never failing to oppose the monopolizing schemes of the City of London ” ; and, some twenty years later, Tucker, when defending Nugent’s Parliamentary conduct, emphasised that he had been

the sole instrument of rejecting in the last session a bill framed by the bankers of London, and supported by all their interest, for the laudable purpose of bringing to their shops all the deposited money of Great Britain, to the total destruction of the banking business in Bristol, and all other towns except the Metropolis. . . .

During the war he more eminently distinguished himself as our guardian and protector. Not one port in the three Kingdoms was so well, or so constantly provided with convoys and protections, as the port of Bristol.¹

When the Whigs first invited Nugent to stand for Bristol “ they proposed to stipulate with him for a very large sum of money towards defraying the expenses of a contest ”. But when he refused to be at any expense, the Bristol merchants, in the first place the Quakers and Dissenters, raised the necessary funds, which ran into four figures.² Here, as in most places, whatever genuine popular party feeling there was, had a religious colouring. Having succeeded in returning one Member in 1754, the Bristol Whigs tried for the second seat at a by-election in 1756, but failed, and after £60,000 had been spent on these two occasions,³ animosities subsided and “ a reconciliation ensued amongst the citizens ”.⁴ The Tories, to have “ the opinion on their side that they are not the disturbers of the peace of the city ”, had announced beforehand “ that in case of a victory . . . they themselves will be the first to propose a compromise for the future ”.⁵ This was now concluded—“ a solemn agreement between the agents of both parties, that the candidate to be named by one, should be supported by the other, during three successive Parlia-

¹ Tucker, *op. cit.* pp. 11-12.

² See p. 252.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Dean Tucker, *op. cit.* p. 6.

⁵ Tucker to Lord Hardwicke, March 13, 1756 ; Add. MSS. 35692, ff. 130-31.

ments".¹ In other words, the two competing political organisations took out a joint lease for the two seats, defining beforehand its duration, and Nugent was re-elected as a Whig even after 1762—on accepting office in 1766 and twice in 1768—although he adhered to every single Government except that of the Rockinghams, and even voted against the Repeal of the Stamp Act. On June 28, 1768, he wrote to William Knox that he had been re-elected unanimously,

but not without some untoward circumstances arising from a jealousy conceived by the multitude of too much power assumed by the two societies in nominating their candidates; some grumbled, but all voted for me.²

Thus caucus politics, even when successful, were not popular, whilst party politics on a national scale did not as yet prevail even in places such as Bristol, which in appearance were politically organised. When the Coalition Government was formed in 1783, "the Tory Members for Bristol (Brickdale and Daubeney) . . . threw in their lot with the Coalition, while Cruger³ who . . . was brought forward again at the dissolution of 1784, favoured Pitt". But "a careful comparison of the poll books of 1781 and 1784 shows that those who supported Cruger as a Whig" continued to support him in 1784 as a Tory, and similarly the supporters of Daubeney and Brickdale followed them when they adhered to the North-Fox Coalition.

A few out-voters, especially from London, transferred their votes, but in Bristol itself, the only change of any person of standing in

¹ Dean Tucker, *op. cit.* p. 6.

² *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, "Various Collections", vol. vi. p. 96.

³ Henry Cruger, a New-Yorker by birth, but settled in trade at Bristol, represented it as an opposition Whig, 1774-80, but was defeated both at the general election of 1780 and at the by-election in 1781. He was again returned for Bristol in 1784, though at that time absent in America, and in 1790, before the end of the Parliament, moved to New York, where he was elected to the Senate in 1792 (about him see Henry C. Van Schaack, *Henry Cruger*, New York, 1859).

the city was of Edward Brice, alderman (mayor, 1782-83) a member of an old Whig family, who voted for Cruger in 1781 and for Brickdale in 1784.¹

Nottingham.—If Bristol serves as illustration for the great out-ports, Nottingham stands for large county towns dependent mainly on local trade, and therefore apt to be influenced by the neighbouring big landowners, who moreover in many cases owned also a considerable amount of house property in these towns. Its franchise was in freemen and forty-shilling freeholders, and of its 2000 voters three-fourths were resident in the borough, the rest mostly in its neighbourhood.² The Duke of Newcastle, one of the chief landowners in the county and Recorder of the borough, headed the Whigs, Lord Middleton the Tories, and usually the two parties divided the representation of the town.

“ Lord Howe ”, wrote Newcastle to his chief agent in Notts., J. S. Charlton, M.P. for Newark, on July 21, 1753, was with me yesterday to ask my interest for Nottingham. I could give him no positive answer, till I knew the state of the town ; and the real intentions of those, who have the greatest weight there. Lord Howe said, the town would neither chuse two Whigs, nor two Tories, but one and one ; and thought, he had much the best interest of any Whig.

Newcastle, therefore, wishing to preserve “ the peace of the town ”, instructed Charlton to ascertain Lord Middleton’s attitude.³ From him Charlton found out that “ the gentlemen in the country ” did not think

¹ A. B. Beaven, “ Bristol Men in the Eighteenth Century ”, in the *Bristol Times and Mirror*, February 15, 1913.

² There are no poll books for the Nottingham elections of 1754 and 1774 in the British Museum, but that for 1774 is in the Bodleian, and I base on it the above statement. The only poll books for 1754 I know of are those mentioned in the *List of Books in the Reference Library* at Nottingham, No. 14 (1890), p. 66 : *Alphabetical List of Burgesses and Freeholders* and *Copy of the Poll of the Burgesses and Freeholders*. I have had no opportunity to examine them.

³ Add. MSS. 32732, ff. 336-7.

of proposing two for the town of Nottingham, even should my Lord Howe stand, but as his Lordship was the only gentleman, who subscribed against the burgesses their friends, in favour of the corporation,¹ all attempts to induce them to join his Lordship would be impracticable. There rather seems a disposition to join Mr. Plumptre, his family having principally undertook their cause.²

Plumptre, a second cousin of Howe, was of a family which had sat for Nottingham under Richard II and Elizabeth, and his father, a faithful adherent of Newcastle, had represented it for thirty-two years between 1706 and 1747. But now Newcastle desired Plumptre "to lay aside any thoughts of standing for Nottingham the next election",³ and considered that Plumptre's election was anyhow doubtful, as Abel Smith, the local banker,⁴ had declared for Howe.⁵ Plumptre, however, was not willing to desist,⁶ and subsequently, though hoping to retain Newcastle's "friendship and goodness", joined interests with the Tory candidate,⁷ whilst on August 29, Charlton thus reported a further visit to Middleton :

I found my Lord in the greatest distress and confusion at the ferment raised in Nottingham on Lord Howe's coming down. The language of the place, that his Lordship has sold the burgesses, and that they would stone both him and his servants, on which his Lordship sent over that he should be determined by the burgesses. He must otherwise have lost all weight, beside his own ease and quiet, which he will not give up on any consideration whatever. . . .⁸

¹ Lord Howe had contributed £500 to a lawsuit in which the corporation was engaged against the burgesses of Nottingham.

² Add. MSS. 32732, f. 393.

³ See his letter to Plumptre, August 9, 1753; *ibid.* f. 437.

⁴ Before the century was out Smith's bank was one of the first in England and a grandson of his a peer; and between 1770 and 1910, at least twenty-four of his descendants (not counting those of his brother, Samuel) sat in the House of Commons for a joint term of 364 years.

⁵ Newcastle to Charlton, Add. MSS. 32732, ff. 439-440.

⁶ Letter to Newcastle, August 18; *ibid.* ff. 493-4.

⁷ See Add. MSS. 32733, ff. 122-3 and 166-7.

⁸ Add. MSS. 32732, f. 572.

Still, Newcastle stood by his promise to Howe, who, assisted by the most prominent members of the Corporation, "walk'd the town" (their presence serving at the canvass to exert pressure on their dependants to engage themselves accordingly). Among those who accompanied Howe were Abel Smith and his two sons. But

My Lord Middleton hearing of the extraordinary zeal of the Smith's family (and having constantly a very great sum of money lying dead (as to himself) in their hands which they employ to their own profit) sent his steward . . . to them threatening that unless they immediately chang'd their behaviour . . . he would take all his money out of their hands and perswade all his friends to do the like. This message had such an effect upon the mean spirits of the Smith's family (whose idol is money) that one of the sons went next day to Lord Middleton and in the name of his father, his brother and himself, gave up Lord Howe and his interest (as much as in them lay) and promised to do as Lord Middleton should direct them.¹

This is a typical example of the system of organised bullying which worked from the top downwards, and it is hardly necessary to enter here into the detail of Newcastle's own activities; his stewards at Nottingham had to secure his dependants, and examine the ways of influencing other voters; to his estate agents in other parts of the country lists were sent of Nottingham voters in their "collections"; the Excisemen were worked with due discretion (as the Commissioners were debarred by law from giving "directions to their officers about elections"); the poor burgesses, with whom "money and the best bidder is become the by-word", received petty bribes; etc., etc. But it is worth noticing that two friends of Newcastle, who them-

¹ Add. MSS. 32733, ff. 174-5. It is obvious from the whole tenor of the letter that its writer, Clay, Newcastle's Nottingham agent, was personally hostile to the Smith family; at the end he had, however, to insert the correction that "George Smith, who married a relation of Lord Howe's", declared that his brother had no right to speak in his name, and that he continued to support Howe.

selves were largely indebted to him for their seats—John White, M.P. for Retford, and John Thornhagh, knight of the shire—supported Plumptre and secured for him their tenants.¹

Newcastle and the Corporation proved victorious; Howe received 980 votes (901 of them “single”), the Tory candidate, Sir Willoughby Aston, 924; Plumptre only 915.

Thus in boroughs great and small, big territorial influences were apt to determine elections. To what extent? That is a question to which no general answer can ever be given, for even within the same borough, conditions differed from one election to the next; but so much is certain, that outside burghage or merely nominal boroughs, those absolutely at one man’s command were infinitely fewer than stated in the beautifully clear calculations made by reformers. In a borough of the size of Nottingham, neither Newcastle nor Middleton could absolutely dictate to the voters, though both could, in various ways, exercise very considerable influence.

When in 1758 Lord Howe was killed at ‘Ticonderoga, Lord Middleton declared “that he was determined to take no part in the Nottingham election and that his people might vote as they pleased”,² whilst Newcastle thus explained his situation to Charlton, on August 28, 1758:

. . . I thought the merit of the Howe family, at this time, was such, that no friend to the Government could be against shewing them a proper mark of respect. For that reason, I have wrote to the present Lord Howe,³ to propose to him the vacating his seat for Dartmouth, and the chusing him for Nottingham; and, in that case, I would have endeavour’d to get Plumtree chose for Dartmouth to make every-

¹ *Ibid.* ff. 242 and 284. White said that Plumptre “is his old acquaintance”.

² J. S. Charlton to Newcastle, September 22, 1758; Add. MSS. 32883, f. 250.

³ The Admiral, afterwards in command of the Fleet in America during the Revolution.

thing easy. The Mayor and Aldermen of Nottingham have wrote a letter to my Lady Howe, desiring to chuse one of her family. This letter has been shew'd to me, and my Lady Howe desires that her son the lieutenant-colonel,¹ may be chose for the remainder of this Parliament, and the present Lord Howe to come in afterwards. . . . I cannot hut think myself extremely ill-used by the Whig Corporation of Nottingham, where I am Recorder, to make all these offers and applications, without taking any *notice* of me, or giving me the least knowledge of them; and it is the more extraordinary and ungrateful, as I serv'd their friend pretty materially the last election against a very good Whig, and the son of the oldest, and one of the best, friends, I ever had in Nottinghamshire.²

Finally Newcastle had to accept the arrangement as made between Lady Howe and the Corporation, and so had Plumptre. Before the end of the year Plumptre was returned through Newcastle's mediation for Penryn, and in 1761 and 1768 he and General Howe were elected for Nottingham.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—As a third example I take this big, independent trading town in the north. Its electorate exceeded 2000—2388 voted in 1741, 2165 in 1775, and 2245 in 1780³—and in 1734 and 1741 two Tories were successful; but in 1747, in view of the heavy expense of the previous contests, the representation was “compromised”. From that year till 1774, Matthew Ridley, a Whig, shared it with Sir Walter Calverley Blackett, who sat for Newcastle as a Tory from 1734 till his death in 1777. In 1741 Blackett

was at the height of his popularity . . . styled . . . *the Patriot, the Opposer of the Court, and the Father of the Poor*; the latter

¹ William Howe, who commanded the British troops in North America, 1775–77.

² Add. MSS. 32883, ff. 141–3.

³ Of these 2245 voters, only about half—1148—were resident in the town, 889 were from the country, and 208 from London; “every voter at Newcastle upon Tyne, coming from London, is said to cost 30l.” (see *Report of the Committee . . . upon the State of Representation in England and Wales* (1792), p. 14).

was, indeed, an appellation he justly merited, for never, perhaps, did the poor of Newcastle and its neighbourhood receive more support or relief from any individual than from Sir Walter Blackett.¹

Here is a short selection from the "acts of humanity his generous heart teemed with": In 1736 he built a public library for Newcastle. When in 1739 the harbour froze, he gave 200 guineas for the relief of the unemployed, and by his personal exertions collected another £1000. In 1751 he gave £200 to the Newcastle Infirmary and £50 to be continued annually for its support; in 1754, £1200 for a Hospital for "decayed burgesses"; in 1757, £100 for the relief of the poor because of the prevailing scarcity of grain; in 1759, £1000 to the Infirmary; between 1764 and 1774, £2260 to augment seventeen small livings of the clergy, etc., etc., etc.

By 1774 a new political movement was rising in a constituency which in the reign of George II had been nurtured by Blackett, now a supporter of the Court,² on a combination of private benefactions and opposition cant. The fact that Ridley and Blackett refused in 1769 to present a petition from the burgesses for the dissolution of Parliament, was brought up against them,³ and radical resolutions for Parliamentary reform were drawn up by the opposition, whose candidates were Constantine Phipps, subsequently second Lord Mulgrave, a distinguished sailor (in politics connected with Lord Sandwich

¹ See *Memoirs of the Public Life of Sir Walter Blackett of Wallington, Bart.*, Newcastle (1819), p. xv.; by "J. S."—obviously John Sykes, a Newcastle bookseller and antiquary.

² The author of the *Memoirs of the Public Life* remarks that in a poll book belonging to a burgess "who took great interest in the public concerns, we find the following notes: 'Sir Walter is now no longer the opposer, but the favourite of the court; he attends the levée, is noticed by the king and bowed to by the Minister.'" This phrase, as a matter of fact, is taken from *The Contest*.

³ See *The Contest* (1774), p. 23.

and the Court), and Thomas Delaval,¹ a rich merchant and brother of Sir John and Sir Francis Delaval. Still, non-political considerations had even greater weight. Phipps

on all occasions during his canvass, and upon the hustings, declared his warmest attachment to the best interests of Newcastle, and especially to the improvement of the river Tyne, which he considered as being capable of becoming one of the finest rivers in the world, but which ignorance, inattention and avarice had converted into what he called "a cursed horse-pond". That . . . he would exert all his influence with the admiralty, to whom he was personally known, to protect, cherish and aggrandize the important and numerous branches of trade on the river Tyne.²

Further, in 1774 Blackett "was far from being so popular as he was at the preceding contest, having unfortunately engaged in the violent party question relative to the Town Moor, which about this time agitated every breast, and destroyed the peace of many families".³ "Party question"—what was it? In 1772 the Corporation, whose side Blackett espoused, had let out 89 acres of the Town Moor "for the purpose of being cultivated and improved". The burgesses who had the right to "the herbage of the Town Moor, Castle Leazes and Nun's Moor . . . for two milch cows each",⁴ felt injured thereby and, as their opponents retained "all the senior council on the circuit", turned to a certain George Greive, the son of

¹ About Thomas Delaval, an interesting figure, see also *The Delaval Papers*, edited by John Robinson; *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Report 13, App. vi. the *Delaval Papers*, edited by R. Ward; R. E. G. Cole, *The History of Doddington*.

² See *Impartial History of the Town and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne* (1801), p. 181.

³ See *Memoirs of the Public Life*, pp. xxvii.-xxviii.

⁴ See on this dispute, *The Newcastle Freeman's Pocket Companion*, by a Burgess (1808), and *Report of the Select Committee of Burgesses of Newcastle-upon-Tyne* (1811).

an Alnwick solicitor and a prominent radical,¹ "desiring him to ask the Bill of Rights influence with Serjeant Glynn to come and plead their cause: Mr. Greive cheerfully undertook the task. . . ." ² Thus the Newcastle burgesses pulled political wires to secure the best counsel, and the radicals in turn tacked their own political cries on to the milch cows on the Town Moor. None the less, Blackett and Ridley were re-elected.³

On the death of Sir Walter Blackett in 1777, his nephew, Sir John Trevelyan (an ancestor of Sir Charles Trevelyan, who now represents Newcastle-upon-Tyne as a Labour Member) came forward as candidate for the borough, and the following appeal was made on his behalf :

Though unknown to many of you, yet be assured he inherits the same generous principles of his late worthy uncle ; and so much so, that the loss of the one can alone be made up by the possession of the other.⁴

Neither Mulgrave nor Thomas Delaval were now available, and George Greive and the radicals put forward as their candidate A. R. Bowes (originally Stoney), a disreputable Irish adventurer who, on marrying the Dowager Countess of Strathmore, the daughter and heiress of George Bowes, M.P. for County Durham, 1727-60, had assumed her name.⁵ The cry was raised of "Bowes and Freedom", and the opponents were described as "a com-

¹ In 1794 self-styled "défendeur officieux des braves sans-culottes de Louvenciennes, ami de Franklin et de Marat, factieux et anarchiste de premier ordre et désorganisateur du despotisme dans les deux hémisphères depuis vingt ans". About him see *D.N.B.*

² See *The Contest*, pp. 27-8. Serjeant Glynn was the famous radical, Recorder of the City of London and Member for Middlesex from December 1768 till his death in 1779.

³ Blackett received 1432 votes, Ridley 1411, Phipps 795, and Delaval 677.

⁴ From "A Free Burgess"; see W. Garret's *Collection of Newspaper Cuttings, etc.*, 1777-84, in the British Museum, pp. 3 x. and 24.

⁵ An only child born of that marriage died in infancy.

bination of wealth and power, to suppress the free elections of the people"—“O break the *closet-combinations* of the magistrates and gentry whose glory it seems to be to treat their inferiors as slaves”.² But the supporters of Trevelyan wisely pointed out that Bowes, should his wife die, would go “back to his original insignificancy”; “would it . . . be proper, would it be decent . . . to entrust our rights and properties with a man who in . . . a few hours may himself be divested of the very appearance of an estate?” Whereas Trevelyan was “an Englishman of an antient and most respectable family, possessed of a large permanent estate”.³ Sir John Trevelyan won the seat by 1163 against 1068 votes for Bowes.⁴

By 1780 Bowes was deep in debt, and whilst “fully engrossed by our patriotic meetings and *their appendages*”, was trying to compensate a London creditor by tips for bets; *e.g.* he wrote to him on February 29:

I am glad to find the opinions of people in London against my election; it will give you an opportunity of making some good bets; and so positive am I, that I have no objection to your standing a *third part to nothing*, and you may make me liable to pay the whole in case I should not succeed. But you must bet upon a proviso that L[ady] S[trathmore] lives.⁵

This was obviously an indispensable condition for the triumph of “freedom”. She lived, and Bowes was returned together with Sir Matthew Ridley. His later adventures, imprisonment and death within the Rules of King’s Bench Prison do not enter into this story, which

¹ In Bowes’s election address of February 19, 1777; see W. Garret’s *Collection*, p. 15.

² From a “Poor Burgess”, *ibid.* p. 20.

³ *Ibid.* p. 502.

⁴ See on that election also *North Country Diaries*, Publications of the Surtees Society, vol. 118 (1910), vol. i. pp. 231-3.

⁵ See *The Lives of Anthony Robinson Bowes, Esq., and the Countess of Strathmore*, by Jesse Foot, p. 70.

can best be concluded with a description of that radical hero, given by his surgeon, Jesse Foot, "from 39 years professional attendance":

He was a villain to the backbone! . . . He cloathed all his villainies in the dress of virtue. . . . To sum up his character in a few words, he was cowardly, insidious, hypocritical, tyrannic, mean, violent, selfish, deceitful, jealous, revengeful, inhuman and savage, without a single countervailing quality.¹

Canterbury.—Here was an old cathedral town, opulent and singularly free of any dominant aristocratic influence, in rich agricultural country, an eighteenth-century "Casterbridge". ("The great wealth and encrease of the city of Canterbury," wrote Defoe in 1724, "is from the surprizing encrease of the hop grounds all round the place." ²) What were its politics? In what terms were they transacted?

At the dissolution in 1761 its Members were Sir James Creed, a London merchant and Director of the East India Company, a regular follower of Newcastle's, and Matthew Robinson Morris, of Mount Morris near Hythe, subsequently second Lord Rokeby.³ Morris did not stand again, but Thomas Best, another country gentleman⁴ who had been returned in 1747 but had "declined the poll" in 1754, came forward, and Newcastle tried, through W. Freind, the Dean of Canterbury, to arrange a junction between him and Creed.⁵ But Best joined Richard Milles, a Tory and country gentleman,⁶ and Dean Freind feared that Creed's

¹ *Ibid.* pp. 185-7.

² *A Tour through Great Britain*, vol. i., Letter II, p. 42.

³ His sister, the tiresome Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu, states that he was re-elected in 1754 without expense; see E. J. Climençon, *Elizabeth Montagu*, vol. ii. pp. 49-50.

⁴ Described by Mrs. Montagu as "a man of fortune" (*ibid.*, i. p. 121).

⁵ Add. MSS. 32915, ff. 71-2.

⁶ Add. MSS. 32916, ff. 117 and 323. About Milles and his family see Hasted, *Kent*, vol. iii. p. 728; G. A. Carthew, *The Hundred of Lavanditch*, part 3, pp. 126-7; R. F. Scott, *Admission Register of St. John's College, Cambridge*; Berry, *Kent* (Genealogies).

success would be "a little doubtful" should he stand alone against their united interests. There was, however, already another candidate in the field, William Mayne, a merchant, about whom Sir Harry Erskine wrote to Lord George Sackville on December 11, 1760, that he "is attached to Lord Bute, who espouses his interest". He asked Sackville

to request the Duke of Dorset to recommend him to Sir Thomas Hales, Dr. Curtis, and such gentlemen as have influence in Canterbury, that he may not appear as one totally unknown, which they endeavour to represent him in that city.¹

On January 1, 1761, Newcastle wrote to Lord Sondes, his nephew by marriage and chief of the Kentish Whigs :

My Lord Bute is a particular friend of this Mr. Mayne ; and is now very desirous, that he should join Sir James Creed ; and I think Sir James can do nothing so well, for his own sake or for the Whig interest, as to join a friend of my Lord Bute's against the Tories.

I have recommended the junction to Sir James Creed ; and I have wrote to the Dean of Canterbury my opinion upon it. I therefore hope you will concur with me in it.²

An agreement between Creed and Mayne was concluded on January 23 ; "the junction formed by Mr. B[est] and Mr. M[illes]" , wrote Freind to Newcastle on January 3, 1761, "has, in spite of their endeavors to avoid it, given a *party* complexion to the cause, which will do them no

¹ *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Stopford-Sackville MSS. (1904), vol. i. p. 45. William Mayne was one of the twenty-one children of William Mayne of Powis, County Clackmannan, had been for many years in the mercantile house of his family established at Lisbon for about a century, but had retired from it in 1757, and married in 1758 Frances, daughter of Joshua, second Viscount Allen. He sat for Canterbury, 1774-80, and for Gatton, 1780-90, was created a baronet in 1763 and Baron Newhaven [Ir.] in 1776. There are a few letters from Mayne among the Bute MSS.

² Add. MSS. 32917, f. 16 ; for Newcastle's letter to Dean Freind, see *ibid.* f. 14.

service".¹ But Milles, the Tory, came out in support of Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, the Whig Member for the county, and Knatchbull waited with him on Newcastle, who was, however, now bound to the other side. "If Mr. Milles intends to act as he expresses himself now", wrote Sondes to Newcastle on January 21, "tis a pity he had not made his intentions known sooner".²

The campaign which was carried on for Mayne at Canterbury is described in *An Address to the Electors of the City of Canterbury*, by Thomas Roch, citizen.³ Stories were circulated

that Mr. Mayne was a man of great merit and fortune; that he had been preceptor to his Majesty, and that his Majesty was greatly improved in mercantile affairs, and thoroughly a judge of the ballance of trade, and from his instruction; that Mr. Mayne was a man of great parts, had great interest at court, and was an intimate friend and companion of Mr. Pitt.

. . . If any good woman went to tell her neighbour the good and joyful tidings, she was prevented by, lord! neighbour! I am glad you are come, I have great news to tell you: they say our King's schoolmaster is coming to be our member of parliament, and that the King will do any thing that he asks of him.

In fact, Mayne's position was described as such "that hopes might be entertained of having a great part of the Court Calendar filled up with the freemen of Canterbury".

The character and methods of the Tory opposition can, on the other hand, be gathered from letters written to Newcastle by Sir George Oxenden, a Kentish baronet and M.P. for Sandwich, 1720-54. He wrote on February 1, 1761:

Mayne won't carry it I hear, tho' Creed, it is thought, will; I dined with them; a numerous meeting of shoemakers, broken

¹ January 3, 1761; *ibid.* 32917, f. 112.

² *Ibid.* f. 475.

³ Thomas Roch was a cabinet-maker, "a native of Ireland". For an obituary notice of him see *Gent. Mag.*, 1781, p. 46.

tradesmen, &c., &c., but few or none of the principal inhabitants of the place.—No Scotch—no foreigner is the cry.¹

Thus in Kent it was the Tories who worked the cry of “No Scotch”. Oxenden wrote again on February 19 :

. . . at Canterbury it is certain the principle people in the city are against them [Creed and Mayne], and what is worse the farmers of note round about, and ten miles off, are busy in making votes for Milles and Best, I know their influence very well, by experience at Sandwich in 1741—where they certainly carried the election for my partner Mr. Pratt—I believe we might stop several of them, but as we stop them in the county where they are inclined, notwithstanding the orders they receive from their landlords, it will be too much to ask them in the city where they have received directions to act as they do. . . .²

And again on March 2 :

There will be a hard match at Canterbury, I dare say it will cost them four thousand a man. The other side out manage them vastly, they certainly have the majority in the town, several Whig tradesmen, dead for us in the county, and dead against Creed and Mayne in the town, on account of the near neighborhood of Milles particularly. Most of the Prebends in the same way, as the Milles's visit and play at cards always with one or other of them, so that they have got several capital people away from us in the city, and we not one from them. . . . The farmers are all for the neighbors, some of *our* tenants and of the other Whig gentlemen round about, but we do not think it prudent, at least it is my opinion not, to stop them, for they are a stubborn race of men, and as we manage them in other things and they readily follow us, so they like to have their heads sometimes, and it must be done—and Mayne's being called a Scotchman has set them all afire and is, as you may imagine, an indication how much a Scotch interest is cry'd out against in this part of the world.³

On March 16, 1761, the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote to Newcastle about Best :

¹ Add. MSS. 32918, f. 179. “Foreigner” means here, of course, not a native of Kent.

² Add. MSS. 32919, ff. 116-17. ³ *Ibid.* ff. 374-5.

Mr. Best . . . made me a visit this morning : and without asking for my interest, which he appeared sensible ought to be given to the other side, earnestly desired me to assure your Grace in his name, that if he was chosen, he would not enter into opposition, or put himself on a party footing, but concur with the Administration in everything, as far as he honestly could.¹

On March 28, 1761, Milles and Best, the anti-Scottish "Tories", were elected by 806 and 788 votes, against 691 for Creed and 686 for Mayne,² Bute's "Whig" candidate. The case is recommended to the careful consideration of those who discuss the politics of 1761 in terms of "parties".

Coventry.—I take this as last illustration of cities with more than 1000 voters—an example of a corrupt borough, whose "politics" were shunned by most of its neighbours. This is the account of it which Taylor White, a Welsh judge and younger brother of John White, M.P. for Retford, sent on March 22, 1768, to his daughter Anne :

I dined at Coventry where I found the town had been set into a flame by the accidental coming of a stranger, one Mr. Warren,³ a Shropshire gentleman, a day or two before the election, the old Members were Mr. Conway, Mr. Archer. The town were displeased at Mr. Archer's not having paid all the demands made on him for his last election, tho' most probably he paid more than was due. They went round the country to the Tory gentlemen, among the rest to Mr. Ludford and Lord Craven's brother, but none of their own country chose to meddle with the Coventry electors. So this Mr. Warren who by the bye has sold all his estate in Shropshire to Lord Clive⁴ was invited by the landlord of the Bull Inn at Coventry to stand, which he very wisely accepted of, and stood a poll which he lost by about fifty votes, however he was persuaded to demand a scrutiny and sent for Mr. Newnham to be his council and also to Sergt. Jephson from Shrewsbury. I saw Newnham at Coventry and advised him to take his fees before he went about business for

¹ Add. MSS. 32920, f. 253.

² Of 1339 Canterbury voters in 1790, 832 were resident in the town, 153 from London, and 354 from the country ; see *Report of the Committee*, p. 14.

³ Walter Waring, not Warren.

⁴ See p. 362.

from all accounts of Mr. Warren's finances he would scarce get any if he did not secure them beforehand.¹

On the poll H. S. Conway received 972 votes; Andrew Archer, with whom "the town were displeased", 633; Walter Waring, 479.² The politics of the landlord of the Bull Inn and his associates require no comment.

The conclusion which this analysis of a few of the freest and most important urban constituencies impresses on one's mind is that it was not the state of the franchise alone which about 1760 was responsible for the absence of real "politics" in elections, and that "corruption" was not a shower-bath from above, constructed by Walpole, the Pelhams, or George III, but a water-spout springing from the rock of freedom, to meet the demands of the People. Political bullying starts usually from above, the demand for benefits, from below; the two between them made eighteenth-century elections.

Boroughs with 500-1000 Voters

None of the 22 boroughs with 500-1000 voters was controlled by the Government, and none was absolutely in the power of one family, but most were under a territorial influence. At Bedford in 1761, on a compromise continued from 1754, the Duke of Bedford nominated one Member and the Corporation the other.³ Carlisle was always under

¹ *Memoirs of the House of White of Wallingwells* (1886), pp. 40-41. About Waring and his Coventry elections, see also H. T. Weyman, "Members of Parliament for Bishop's Castle", *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeol. Soc.*, second series, vol. x. (1898), p. 61.

² Of 2525 Coventry voters in 1790, 1891 were resident in the town, 356 were from London, and 278 from the country; see *Report of the Committee*, p. 14.

³ On August 8, 1753, Philip Yorke wrote to Lord Hardwicke:

The Duke of Bedford and the Corporation have settled their affairs for the next election. The Duke brings in Mr. Ongley, and

aristocratic patronage, of the Earls of Carlisle, the Dukes of Portland, or the Lowthers ;¹ Derby was under that of the Dukes of Devonshire ; Cirencester, of the Bathursts ; Evesham, of the Rushouts ; Grantham, of the Duke of Rutland and the Cust family ; at Yarmouth in Norfolk, between 1722 and 1784, one Member was always a Townshend and the other a Walpole ; during the same time at Newark one Member was always the nominee of the Duke of Rutland and the other of the Duke of Newcastle,² but even their united interest had to stand a severe contest in 1754 against that of a local clergyman, Dr. Wilson.³ At Lichfield the representation was divided between the Ansons and the Leveson-Gowers ; and in spite of the apparent size of the

the Corporation Mr. Herne, his Grace also to chuse Alderman Dickenson (who is reckoned a moderate Tory) for one of his boroughs (Add. MSS. 35351, f. 249).

In a letter of August 22 Lord Hardwicke remarked that it is generally thought that his Grace has made an odd bargain with the Tories for the town, and that he has really no Member of his own for that place. It is strongly affirm'd here that your neighbour Mr. Ongley is a determin'd Tory, but I thought you had told me otherwise . . . (*ibid.* ff. 265-6).

In 1761 Ongley was transferred to the county and Richard Vernon, a regular Bedford Whig, was the Duke's nominee for the borough.

¹ See R. S. Ferguson, *Cumberland and Westmorland M.P.'s* (1871).

² For the sake of formal accuracy I have to state that in 1768 the "Pelham" candidate was chosen by Lord Lincoln, to whom Newcastle had *inter vivos* made over his Newark property.

³ The opposition candidate was Edward Delaval, subsequently a famous scientist. "To secure his return", writes R. E. G. Cole in his *History of Doddington*, "his brothers [J. H. and F. B. Delaval] entered into an agreement with Dr. Bernard Wilson, D.D., Vicar of Newark, 1719-72, who used all the influence given him by his position there, and the possession of a large fortune obtained by questionable means from Sir George Markham, of Sedgebrooke, to establish a parliamentary influence in the borough. . . ." The text of the agreement is given there in full. For Newcastle's management of that election, see his correspondence, especially with his agent and nominee, J. S. Charlton, in Add. MSS. 32733-5.

electorate, Lichfield, which had a complicated franchise and was swamped by "sham-voters", was less of a real constituency than many a smaller borough; at Stafford, with about 320 voters, almost all of them local tradesmen, "the electorate must have been far more democratic than at Lichfield. . . ."¹ At Honiton the Yonge family had a traditional and very expensive interest,² and at Hereford the Scudamores held one seat, 1754-1818, and 1819-26. At Preston, Lord Derby established his influence in 1768 by defeating the Corporation and on petition gaining for the borough the widest male franchise ever known in the British Isles; at that election "there wasn't a how [whole] winda in t' tawn".³ At Beverley there was no one predominant interest. Oxford, Reading, St. Albans, Ipswich, Sudbury, Maldon, Maidstone, and Dover, *i.e.* the medium-sized towns round London, were comparatively free and some of them very expensive; at St. Albans the Spencers⁴ and the Grimstons came near being patrons, at Maidstone the Finches and Marshams, but in neither borough was a firm and exclusive interest established.

But even where there was a well-established territorial

¹ See J. C. Wedgwood, *Staffordshire Parliamentary History*, vol. ii. p. 278.

² See p. 202.

³ See W. Dobson, *History of the Parliamentary Representation of Preston* (1856), p. 10. "Lawless bands of colliers from the neighbourhood of Chorley were here in the interest of the Corporation candidates, while Longridge, Ribchester, and the neighbourhood furnished their quota of armed blackguards (about 2500) for the other side" (*ibid.* p. 11).

⁴ The great Duke of Marlborough had an electoral interest at St. Albans which was subsequently managed by Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough; from her it passed to the Spencer family. But in 1741, when James West was first returned, it was against her wish: "The old Dutches told one that since the mayor and aldermen still opposed her interest, she would find out a way to be even with them before they was aware . . . her Graceless . . . thumpt her cain to the ground in a rage saying they knew not what they did . . ." (G. Neale to J. West, n.d.; Add. MSS. 34734, f. 8).

influence, the patrons had to be careful and not press their claims too far. If one seat was readily and cheerfully conceded to them in recognition of their pre-eminence and their regular benefactions, they were in most cases well advised to leave the town free to take full advantage of the second seat—a type of compromise frequent even in the smallest “corporation” boroughs.¹ One of the most prominent territorial influences in the medium-sized boroughs was that of the Cavendishes at Derby, where they held one seat without a break from 1715 till 1835.² But they never put up two Cavendishes for the borough, and when in 1748 the Duke’s own manager, Thomas Rivett, was returned for the second seat against the Duke’s candidate, Thomas Stanhope, the revolt was not visited on the Member and his electors, but smoothed over before the next general election by Rivett receiving a secret service pension, obtained for him by the Cavendishes.³

Evesham was represented by the Rushouts (descendants of Flemish “Confessors”) at the end of the seventeenth century and without a break from 1722 till 1796, and again from 1837 till 1841. In 1761 Sir John Rushout, fourth Baronet, had himself and his son returned for the borough, but he “had a hard push to get in his son and many that

¹ See, *e.g.*, the case of Andover, where the Members were elected by the Corporation, consisting of twelve capital burgesses and twelve associates. Lord Portsmouth had considerable influence in the borough, but when, before the general election of 1761, Newcastle applied to him on behalf of Francis Delaval, he replied: “When I recommended M[ajor] G[eneral] Griffin to my friends at Andover I promised them that I would not interfere farther in the election . . .” (September 28, 1760; Add. MSS. 32912, f. 193). Thus also did the Ryder family act at Tiverton in 1768 (Add. MSS. 32986, f. 142 and 32987, f. 167); etc., etc.

² 1742–54, the seat was held by Lord Duncannon, a son-in-law of the third Duke of Devonshire; 1797–1807, by George Walpole, a grandson of that Duke; otherwise by Cavendishes.

³ See p. 528.

assisted him are sorry that it is so",¹ and at the next general election he hesitated to interfere with the choice of the second Member. James West wrote to Newcastle on October 11, 1767 :

. . . As to Evesham, there will probably be a very warm contest : Sir John Rushout has declined on account of age, and the town where are 900 voters were so angry at his bringing in two last time, that Mr. Rushout has been obliged to declare, he will not join any one and in that light only is his security.²

The Monsons represented Lincoln in Parliament in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and held one seat for forty-six years between 1722 and 1812, while the Sibthorps held the other for twenty-five years in the eighteenth century, and, with the exception of only twelve years, from 1800-61. None the less, much more than tradition and influence was required to carry elections in that city. Lord Monson, when applying for a Court appointment, wrote to Newcastle on May 22, 1758 :

. . . It is not in my power any longer to support or even maintain the interest I so dearly bought at the last general election at Lincoln (by the desire of Mr. Pelham, more than my own inclination) if your Grace will not think of me ; and that the spending £7000 and upwards exclusive of my house being like a fair for two years should not have intitled me to some small favour before this, I own I think hard. . . .³

Naturally in constituencies with many poor voters, who could not aspire even to the smallest offices and could profit from *largesse* only, contests were much desired, and, like the landlord of the Bull Inn at Coventry, their managers would go in search of candidates. Lady Cust wrote to

¹ Thomas Ashfield to James West ; Evesham, March 31, 1761 ; Add. MSS. 34735, f. 267.

² Add. MSS. 32985, f. 443. The Mr. Rushout mentioned above was the son of Sir John, and succeeded him as fifth Baronet.

³ Add. MSS. 32880, f. 200.

her son, Sir John Cust (subsequently Speaker of the House of Commons) on May 9, 1741, about Grantham: "Monday was our election, which was very peaceable and quiett, the freemen are sadly vex'd, there was no opposition".¹ At St. Albans, in 1761, "the third man" was talked about for many months, and became a familiar figure in the town under this truly expressive description—there was no trace of a political element in these discussions. "The town is very clamorous for a third man", wrote Dr. Handley, a local physician, to James West, one of the two official candidates, on October 5, 1760.² "Our third man as yet is in the clouds", he wrote again on November 30.³ "At present no third man appears tho the greatest pains is taken to promote it" (December 21).⁴ Another of West's friends, Grindon, wrote on February 17, 1761: "... Gape . . . has declar'd that if the person sent does not bring a third man", they would start one locally.⁵ Ire-monger, on February 18: "This morning the town was in an uproar. . . . Sherman had received a letter from the 3^d man. . . ." ⁶ "Mr. 3" got finally even into the newspapers, requiring the freemen of St. Albans, though as yet only a numerical symbol, not to engage themselves—the following appeared in a notice in the *General Evening Post* on March 7: "A third person every way qualified for that high trust . . . will be unanimously declared by us, and will very soon make himself publicly known". A week later he materialised in the person of Thomas Corbett, and on March 28, 1761, received 261 votes against 344 for Lord Newnham, the Spencer candidate, and 313 for James West. The joint election expenses of the two successful candidates were £3363 : 4 : 9½⁷—so much immediate profit to St. Albans.

¹ *Records of the Cust Family*, compiled by Lady Elizabeth Cust (1909), vol. ii. p. 245.

² Add. MSS. 34735, f. 55.

³ *Ibid.* f. 94.

⁴ *Ibid.* f. 104

⁵ *Ibid.* f. 152.

⁶ *Ibid.* f. 160. •

⁷ *Ibid.* f. 265

In 1761, of the 44 representatives of boroughs with an electorate of 500-1000 voters, nine were sons of English peers (three of them courtesy lords and one illegitimate), one an Irish peer, the rest mostly country gentlemen. Not a single one was a local business man, and even of local lawyers there were only two—the old Tories, N. Fazakerley, and E. Starkie, Members for Preston. But the “radiation” of the official and commercial classes of London into the provinces becomes noticeable in this type of boroughs. Thomas Fonnereau, of Huguenot parentage, a very rich London merchant, and John Henniker, a merchant and shipbuilder, sat for Sudbury; James West, Secretary to the Treasury, for St. Albans; and Sir Edward Simpson, at one time King’s Advocate-General, and in 1761 Dean of the Arches, Keeper of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and Judge of the Cinque Ports, represented Dover, with Sir Joseph Yorke, Minister to the Hague, for his colleague.¹ Bamber Gascoyne, whose father had been Lord Mayor of London and whose mother was the daughter of a well-known London physician, sat for Maldon; he was one of the governmental “men of business”, on the border-line between Ministers and civil servants. Francis Herne, Member for Bedford, was similarly of a London merchant family. Rose Fuller, Member for Maidstone, was a planter in the West Indies and a squire and iron-master in Sussex, at one time Chief Justice of Jamaica, now interested in business ventures in the City, where his brother Stephen, agent for Jamaica, was an eminent merchant. Lastly, there was Thomas Thoroton, Member for Newark, who acted as the “man of business” to the Manners group (as Rigby did to the Bedfords, Burke to the

¹ The Yorkes were a Dover family, and Joseph Yorke was not a mere Government candidate planted out on a strange place. Still, their choosing him is significant—it seems extremely doubtful whether any of the large towns would have chosen a Member who, from the very nature of his office, could hardly ever attend Parliament.

Rockinghams, Whately to George Grenville, Calcraft to Henry Fox, Robert Jones to Lord Sandwich, etc.).

Of the 44 Members representing medium-sized boroughs, 14 were the first in the male line of their families to enter the British Parliament; seven sat for boroughs which their fathers had represented, twelve succeeded near relatives—the corresponding figures for boroughs with over 1000 voters were eleven and three. To some extent this different proportion may be accidental—the figures are much too small to yield reliable averages—but it also stands to reason that, given lineal descendants, the more important and dignified a constituency, the more likely was the hereditary principle to work out in a direct succession. The lesser seats would be assigned to collaterals or relatives by marriage; and, taking the matter from the other end, although a considerable town might accept a son as successor to his father, it might not agree to extending this hereditary allegiance to more distant relatives.

In this class of boroughs I propose to analyse mainly such as illustrate some new factors, not present in the large towns dealt with in the previous chapter—in the first place, the immediate intervention of the Government, whose influence, though not decisive in any of these boroughs, in a few played a considerable part.

Maldon.—The electorate consisted of some 700 freemen, but as residence was not required and the Corporation could create honorary freemen, there was a good deal of gerrymandering.¹ Between 1754 and 1763 there was at Maldon

¹ See, *e.g.*, letter from Sir George Oxenden, of Deane in Kent, to the Duke of Newcastle, March 2, 1761 (Add. MSS. 32919, ff. 374-5): “. . . a strange account we lately received from Mr. Colebrooke [M.P. for Maldon] that the town of Malden had, at his desire, made us [Sir George and his son] freemen of that place . . . he says ‘that I may easily guess of the cause I am to serve’. I suppose himself is the cause he means. . . .” See also letter from John Bullock to Newcastle asking him to write to Dr. Rutherford at Cambridge “to come

a curious sequence of partial defeats of the Government, by persons who next tried to insinuate themselves into its favour. In 1754 R. S. Lloyd, son of the Solicitor-General and one of the Government candidates, was defeated by John Bullock of Falkbourn Hall, Essex, son of a late Member for the county, and kinsman of the Duke of Bedford.¹ But having captured the seat, Bullock took thought to connect himself with the Government. In a letter of July 14, 1755, George Townshend recommended him to Newcastle as a man "in whom you can deposit that confidence and power which every one who proposes to establish an interest in a corporation town is desirous of having on his side".² In 1761 Bullock was joined to Robert Colebrooke as official candidate, but now Colebrooke was defeated by a new interloper, Bamber Gascoyne, and, on March 31, complained to Newcastle that "several Government votes did not support us, notwithstanding your express order they should".³ By May 1762 Gascoyne seems to have been on the best terms both with the Government and Colebrooke. Bullock wrote to Newcastle about Maldon on May 6, 1762 :

to Maldon to take up his freedom and to vote for Mr. Colebrooke and Mr. Bullock" (Add. MSS. 32920, f. 351).

¹ He is described as such by the Duke of Bedford, who supported him, in a letter of March 30, 1761 (Add. MSS. 32921, f. 192). Sir Richard Lloyd himself was defeated at Ipswich. Hardwicke, as Lord Chancellor, was the chief of the lawyer politicians on the Government side, and expressed to the King his disappointment at these defeats : "His Majesty said, so was he, but that he heard he had starved the cause. I told him that the gentleman had himself assured me that he had spent £3000 at both places. That, as to Maldon, I thought his son had been as sure as my own son at Ryegate . . ." (Hardwicke to Newcastle, April 24, 1754 ; Add. MSS. 32735, ff. 178-9).

² Add. MSS. 32857, ff. 103-104.

³ Add. MSS. 32921, f. 242. These were apparently Custom House officials, for in Newcastle's "Memorandums" of April 2, 1761 (*ibid.* f. 270), appears the following entry : "The account of the custom officers at Malden".

On my coming there, I found every one of the Corporation in great confusion, occasion'd by Mr. Colebrooke and Mr. Gascoyne's having been there and Mr. Gascoyne's offering himself for Recorder, every method was tried to induce them to come into it. Your Grace's name in perticuler was used, commanding them to comply and threatening destruction and loss of places should they refuse. . . .¹

On December 9, 1762, Gascoyne voted against the peace treaty, but four months later, he accepted a place at the Board of Trade.² At the by-election, at which he was opposed by John Huske, a London merchant of American extraction, he naturally had the support of the Treasury; he wrote to Charles Jenkinson, its Secretary, on April 21, 1763 :

I have herewith sent you a list of the freemen of Maldon who are in office under the Government, to desire an immediate conveyance to them that they are to assist me; for I am sorry to tell you, that they are to a man almost against me. The opposition to me is carried on with a great violence and open bribery. Ribbons with "Liberty, property and no excise" are the ornament of my opponents' hoots and carriages, and some other devices of this sort which I do not choose to mention. Guineas and scraps of *North*

¹ Add. MSS. 32938, ff. 93-4.

² Lord Temple to Lady Chatham, November 1762 :

Gascoyne has been here: much dealing with Fox; but I think he is firm (*Chatham Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 193).

Bamber Gascoyne to Lord Bute, December 21, 1762 :

At the request of Mr. Fox and with my own inclination I am to wait on your Lordship upon particular business; . . . if your Lordship will favour me with a line, that I may know your leisure you will oblige . . . (Add. MSS. 5726 D, f. 25).

Bamber Gascoyne to William Pitt, December 22 :

I have attached myself to you upon principle, gratitude, and respect; and could I flatter myself that my going into office was likely to impede any operation of yours I should never forgive myself (*Chatham Correspondence*, pp. 204-5).

Pitt to Gascoyne, December 22, 1762 :

I never in my life expressed my wish to any friend either for their accepting or declining office (*ibid.* pp. 205-6).

Gascoyne now refused the place, but accepted it in April 1763. .

Britons are scattered all over the town and I can assure you that the opposition is founded by that ingenious gentleman Mr. Wilkes and his crew and is more immediately at Government than me. . . .¹

The same day John Bindley, a Commissioner of the Excise, thus explained to Jenkinson the way of dealing with subordinate officials of his own office, in view of the Act forbidding interference with them in elections :

. . . the affair being of the most delicate nature, I can foresee no way of serving Mr. G. but by his application in person or by letter to those who have votes in which case leave of absence may be given to the off. who will then understand what is meant. . . .

N.B. The method proposed above is the only one used here in former cases.

P.S. Huske wrote to me yesterday, which I thought very extraordinary, to assist him with the votes here.²

In spite of this support Gascoyne was defeated by "the ungenerous behaviour and proceedings of the officers of the Customs and the freemen of that borough. . . ." The respect due to the "high station" of the King's Minister, wrote William Hunter, a Custom House official sent to Maldon to work for Gascoyne,

and their dependance on his pleasure either to reward or punish ought to have produced the most chearful complience and concurrence with every request from him to support his election. . . . I have been upon a visit to the several and respective officers of the Customs, freemen of the Corporation on behalf of Mr. Gascoyne, in the course of which . . . nothing has been wanting on my part to declare how necessary it was to compliment him with their votes and interest, and I am ready to affirm that not any the least intimations consequent thereon has been delivered to those officers or their friends from me, but what has been strictly upright and consistent

¹ Add. MSS. 38200, f. 312.

² Huske was connected with and supported by Charles Townshend, to whom he had been deputy in the office of Treasurer of the Chambers about 1760, and Bindley was a friend of Townshend, which may account for the application.

with the freedom of elections, however warm in His Majesty's service or the honour of the honourable House of Commons I have expressed myself. . . .¹

By June 1763 John Huske, the opposition candidate, elected—according to Gascoyne—with the support of Wilkes, seems to have turned a friend to the Government. Edward Richardson, a City agent of Jenkinson's, reported that he had freed Huske's mind from certain wrong "surmises" and shown him that it had been "all Gasconade"; and yesterday they dined together and "we toasted very frankly my Lord Bute's and yours, and next week meet again for the same good purpose".² Huske was not among those who on February 18, 1764, in the division on General Warrants, came very near defeating the Government.

Maidstone.—The Maidstone election of 1761 completes the picture of the confusion of parties in the higher political circles offered by the neighbouring city of Canterbury; shows once more that in so far as parties existed among the rank and file of the electorate, they had usually a religious background—spontaneous Whig action at Maidstone was due to nearly half its population being Nonconformist;³ and exhibits Newcastle handling, or at least professing to handle, Government influence as if it was his personal property.

On February 8, 1761, General Kingsley informed Newcastle that a considerable body of freemen at Maidstone asked him to stand against the two Tory candidates, Mr.

¹ William Hunter to Charles Jenkinson, April 26, 1763; Add. MSS. 38200, f. 421. About a fortnight later, Hunter asked, in consideration of his services at Maldon, to be appointed "to a small collection in an effort" (*ibid.* f. 331).

² Add. MSS. 38201, f. 11. John Huske was subsequently accused in America of having been the author of the Stamp Act, which was wrong. I propose to deal with him at greater length in a future essay; useful information about him was published in *Notes and Queries*, twelfth series, vol. viii. pp. 217 and 335.

³ See *General History of Maidstone*, by Walter Royles (1809).

Hanger, supported by Lord Romney, and Mr. Northey, Lord Aylesford's nominee; but he would not engage against such powerful opponents without Newcastle's assistance.¹ Newcastle answered that, to oblige Lord Granby, he had promised Lord Aylesford "to be for any person, that he would recommend upon this occasion", and called this "quite a private family agreement".² Kingsley, in reply, described the Whig interest at Maidstone as "at its last gasp",³ and gave up the idea of a contest; whilst Sir George Oxenden wrote to Newcastle on February 19:

People are embarrassed (at least I confess I am), what to say, and how to act . . . when the Court is all Tory at Maidstone and all Whig at Canterbury. They laugh at us and tell us, we make a rout about the Whig interest, when no body above sticks by it. . . .⁴

Newcastle replied in a shuffling manner:

Before I had enter'd into any engagement to my Lord Ailesford, I asked General Kingsley, whether he would stand at Maidstone, which he then declined. I did not hear of any opposition, and my best friend, my Lord Granby, having earnestly desired me to assist his brother-in-law, my Lord Ailesford at Maidstone . . . I promised . . . so to do. . . . My engagement was merely a private family affair. . . . It had no relation to the Court, or to any one in it; and they knew nothing of it, when it was done. And therefore I am willing to take the whole blame upon myself; and from this instance, the Court can't be called Tory; for they had nothing to do in it. It is almost the first instance of the kind, in which I ever engaged myself; and I hope, that, with the reasons I have given for it, will excuse me amongst my Whig friends.⁵

None the less a Whig candidate now took the field, Rose Fuller, a personal friend of Newcastle's—he was in search of a constituency, as he had no chance of re-elec-

¹ Add. MSS. 32918, f. 370.

² February 10, 1761; *ibid.* f. 417.

³ February 12, 1761; *ibid.* f. 483. ⁴ Add. MSS. 32919, ff. 116-17.

⁵ *Ibid.* ff. 338-9.

tion at Romney, where "several of the governing men are graziers and the Deering and Furnese family have together a very great estate in the neighbouring marsh which is very profitable to and easy for tenants. . . ."¹ He informed Newcastle on March 1 that he was going to Maidstone with the approval of Lord Sondes.² Newcastle replied that he could not approve of it and, in spite of his love and esteem for Fuller, would have to oppose him. He also feared that Granby and Aylesford might think he had acted a double part, when his "most particular friend" Rose Fuller, by the encouragement of his nephew, Lord Sondes, opposed Aylesford.³ Fuller now mounted the high horse of political principle :

I was . . . invited to offer myself att that town by the Whig interest, which before I was twenty years of age I was convinced was the onely one by which the religion, liberty, property, happiness, power and internal peace of this nation could be preserved. . . . Upon these principles I set out and have continued to act upon and shall persevere into the end of my life.⁴—I attached myself to your Grace because I knew these principles were rivetted in your soul, and not upon account of your birth, riches or power. . . . As the head of that interest . . . your Grace hath a weight in this Kingdom more than you can well conceive, yet I very much doubt your Grace's power in carrying a popular election in any Whig county in favor of one of the other interest.

¹ Rose Fuller to Newcastle, June 23, 1758; Add. MSS. 32881, f. 33. Against pasture for the cattle even the amiability of Rose and Stephen Fuller availed nothing. "Seldom a day", wrote E. Milward to J. Collier in 1756, "but both the Fullers kiss all the women in the Corporation—'tis quite in their taste" (W. V. Crake, "The Correspondence of John Collier," *Sussex Archaeol. Collections*, vol. xlv. p. 94, n). The two Members returned in 1761 were Sir Edward Deering and Thomas Knight, both so-called Tories.

² Add. MSS. 32919, f. 348.

³ *Ibid.* ff. 410-11.

⁴ When he "totally altered his hue", in 1775, Burke called him the "old, withered Rose, who in his best was no better than a dog-rose" (see *Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 7).

He found the warmest reception at Maidstone and expected to carry the election, but was alarmed by news from Chatham

that the Commissioner had . . . sent for all the freemen of Maidstone employed in the dock and acquainted them he had received orders from the Admiralty to direct them to vote for Mr. Northey. . . .

The letter, which started with principles and proceeded with alarms, concludes with a re-insurance :

I am infinitely obliged to your Grace for what my Lord Kinnoul told me to wit . . . that you had kept a seat in Parliament open for me in case I could not carry my election there [at Maidstone].¹

The same day twelve freemen of Maidstone, for themselves "and hundreds more", reminded Newcastle, "the warm and steady patron of liberty," of their past exertions on behalf of "the illustrious House of Hanover", and expressed their "real concern" at losing the advantages they "always us'd . . . to derive from the assistance of the dockmen at Chatham, and others in His Majesty's service". Having dealt with the letter read out by the Commissioner at Chatham Yard, they proceeded :

We beg leave farther to inform your Grace, that Mr. Bingle, assistant to the builder at Chatham, came hither yesterday from Mr. Hanway the Commissioner, to desire the vote and interest of Mr. Edward Prentis, and his son, and Mr. Stephen Prentis, timber dealers of the Yard. Your Grace will therefore pardon us for making this our humble request, that those honest men, who had actually promis'd their votes to Mr. Fuller before the above orders arriv'd, may have some assurance, and that too a publick one, given them, that they shall not suffer by fulfilling their engagements.²

In a letter of March 14, Fuller harped once more on the Government support for Northey, adding the following comment :

¹ Rose Fuller to Newcastle, March 12, 1761; Add. MSS. 32920 ff. 121-2.

² *Ibid.* f. 139.

When I consider Mr. Northey walks before His Majesty, as a Gentleman of his Bedchamber,¹ I can conceive, how it happened this letter was sent, and doe not att all wonder att it.—Although I had heard a determination had been taken to permitt the persons in His Majesty's immediate service to vote for those they liked themselves.—I believe this is the first instance of that determination being departed from.²

Newcastle replied on March 15 :

. . . no consideration can, or shall, induce me to break it [his engagement]. . . . As I am engaged, I will not act one way myself and persuade others to act contrary to it. I have directed Mr. West to let those, who depend upon the Treasury know, that I am for my Lord Aylesford's friend. I have nothing to do with other offices; and therefore the application of the gentlemen to me about the dock votes was extremely improper. . . . In every other borough in Kent, and I may almost say in every other place in England, any . . . interest which I may have is . . . strenuously employ'd in support of the Whig interest. And this I think should satisfy my Whig friends in Kent.³

But however much Newcastle stuck to his engagements, his attempts to keep in with everybody invariably ended in his being suspected of duplicity. On March 23 Lord Barrington, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, reported a conversation with Lord Bute which makes it seem doubtful whether the Court was really so uninterested in Northey's candidature as Newcastle tried to make it appear.

He said smilingly that he must complain of the Treasury; that all the revenue officers to a man who have votes at Maidstone would give them against Mr. Northey; he thought this would make people suspect you of duplicity, and the more so as Fuller was your friend and a Sussex man. That for his own part he did you justice and did not suspect you. . . . I said I know you had given

¹ Northey was one of the five Tories introduced into the Bed-chamber in December 1760 without the knowledge of Newcastle.

² *Ibid.* f. 196.

³ *Ibid.* f. 231.

the usual directions, and had not done any thing to contradict them. . . .¹

And on March 27 Lord Hardwicke wrote to Newcastle that "it begins to be talk'd that altho' you give out that it is a sort of family affair . . . yet it was my Lord B. that induced you to support the Tory-Groom of the Bed-chamber".²

Rose Fuller carried his election at Maidstone, "many officers of the Customs and Excise and many employed in the docks and yards" having voted for him; he now asked Newcastle to "protect those officers from any censure or discountenance".³ Still, now that he no longer required the seat which Newcastle had held for him in reserve, he hinted that the Duke had not wished to see him in Parliament "in that honorable manner I was in the last, and thank a number of honest independant freemen am in the present".⁴ And in August 1761, Fuller, when asking for an appointment for Thomas Nightingale, brother of an eminent Maidstone banker, once more reminded Newcastle of his misdeeds:

. . . The Whigs and Dissenters in general, indeed, I might say, all who are any ways connected with this town, stand in need of something to heal their minds of the soreness they felt and have felt, by and since the recommendation of Mr. Northey by the Administration.

¹ Add. MSS. 32921, ff. 6-7. In another letter, on March 26, Barrington reported a further conversation with Bute reassuring Newcastle of Bute doing him most ample justice (*ibid.* ff. 78-9).

² *Ibid.* ff. 101-4.

³ March 29, 1761; *ibid.* f. 160. The figures were: Fuller 483 votes, Northey 452, Hanger 440.

⁴ Rose Fuller to Newcastle, April 4, 1761; *ibid.* ff. 315-16. Cf. with this a letter which Fuller's nephew by marriage, W. Sotheby, had written to Lord Hardwicke on September 18, 1756, when asking for his support with a voter at Romney—he described Fuller as being "of too much property to desire to be brought in by any interest that should entirely restrain the freedom of his vote" (Add. MSS. 35692, f. 374).

The favour to Mr. Nightingale would convince them that "they are not slighted".¹

St. Albans.—Among the papers of James West at the British Museum there are two volumes of his correspondence concerning the management of the borough of St. Albans.² From that mass of material I choose a few examples to show the character of its politics. Very seldom—in fact, only three times—does one find matters of public interest discussed in these papers covering a period of about twenty-seven years, and whenever they occur, they are of a local character. On February 2, 1755, Dr. Handley, a leading man in the Corporation, wrote to West :

Mr. Gore and Mr. Hale [Members for Herts] have sent circulatory letters all over the county of the designed bill to regulate the carriages desiring the opinion of their constituents relating to it, and how they would have them act.—How far something of that kind may be thought proper by you to our worthy gentry here must leave to your superior judgment, but if you will permit to give mine believe it will be taken well. . . .³

West obviously took the hint, for on February 17 the Mayor is found explaining to him at considerable length how the interests of the borough would be affected by the enforcement of the so-called "Broad Wheel Act" of 26 George II.⁴ The second reference to a public interest is contained in a letter from West to Handley dated September 29, 1759 :

I am glad to tell you that after three years constant application, I have at last fixed the post to come every day to St. Albans, whose prosperity and convenience I am always thinking of.⁵

The third is correspondence about the billeting of troops at St. Albans—as John Page, M.P. for Chichester, said in reply to a suggestion of Major Gibbon of the Hampshire Militia

¹ Add. MSS. 32927, ff. 207-8.

² Add. MSS. 34734 and 34735.

³ Add. MSS. 34734, f. 92.

⁴ *Ibid.* f. 94.

⁵ *Ibid.* f. 329.

(father of Edward Gibbon, the historian) for quartering two of its battalions at Chichester: "One of the tacit obligations upon a Member of Parliament was to keep the place he represented as free as he could from being pestered and burthend with soldiers. . . ." ¹

What we would now call political problems (and a future generation may possibly describe as party manœuvres) do not appear in the correspondence, which is engrossed with petty local intrigues and jealousies, scrambles for the civic honours of the borough, and endless applications for Government jobs and favours.

When after eight months out of office (November 1756-July 1757) West returned with Newcastle to his old place at the Treasury, it was thus that he was congratulated by one of his St. Albans constituents:

I beg leave to congratulate you on your return to that place, which has given you so many opportunities, and will still afford you more, of indulging two of your most amiable and favourite passions, the love of your King and country, and compassion for your distress'd friends. . . . ²

And here are two typical applications from freemen of St. Albans:

H. Luck, writing to James West on April 12, 1759, asks for some small place "not attended with hurry, fatigue or confinement". "I have an interest in the borough of Barnstaple as well as St. Albans, which I hope will intitle me to your favour. . . ." ³

¹ See letter from John Page to Newcastle, September 25, 1761; Add. MSS. 32928, f. 356. See also letter from John Dodd, Member for Reading, to Newcastle, November 4, 1760: "As I find the people of Reading so very desirous of chusing me this next general election, I think it incumbent on me . . . to beg your Grace will speak to Lord Barrington [Secretary at War] to order the regiment that is now quarterd at Reading to be immediately removed . . ." (Add. MSS. 32914, f. 96).

² Add. MSS. 34734, f. 122.

³ *Ibid.* f. 277.

John Stoughton, on May 6, 1759, reminds West of an occasion when, "my being a freeman of St. Alban, you was so kind to promise me, that you would get me to the Board in order to be a supervisor in the Excise. . . ." ¹

Army matters play a considerable part in the correspondence—West had to obtain commissions for gentlemen and discharges for privates. To give one example :

I trouble you now [wrote Handley on March 24, 1759] at the request of Mr. Franklin, the butcher, who has a son a soldier in the Royal Artillery at Bombay in India, he has been gone four years, and the old man says if you will by any means procure his discharge, he and his famely will for ever serve you with single votes ² if requisite the young fellow has a vote. I should be glad, if it be in your power, if you will interest yourself in earnest in this affair. . . . The old man says that last election you promised if he would serve you that if he ever wanted any service in return you would do every thing in your power. . . . Our enemies are very bussy, but such things as these must always frustrate their wicked designs.³

I conclude with a letter from a St. Albans alderman to James West, dated December 5, 1759 :

I heartily congratulate you on your election of High Steward of our borough of St. Albans, I believe we are all extreamly sensible of the henefitts we are likely to enjoy under the influence of a gentleman whose abilitys and interest are so very extensive, and more

¹ Add. MSS. 34734, f. 286.

² "Single votes" means that they would vote for him alone in a two-member constituency.

³ Add. MSS. 34724, f. 276. The general election of 1761 gave the Franklin family a good opportunity for bringing up their request once more ; and the following information was supplied to West by Robert James from the East India House, on April 30, 1761 :

. . . William Franklin went to Bombay in the year 1755 as a mattross in the King's Train of Artillery, but whether he is living or not cannot appear in any of our offices, and if living, as he is in His Majesty's service, his discharge cannot depend upon the Company. By the last advice the said Train was sent from Bombay to the other side of India to assist in the siege of Pondicherry (Add. MSS. 34935, f. 315).

especially as you have given us such strong assurances in your polite letter to the Mayor to support the body and be of real benefit to every member thereof, which hath hastned my intentions of troubling you with the following. . . .¹

Dover.—There was a castle at Dover, forts, ships, trade, and packet boats, which, in terms of patronage, reads: the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, the Ordnance, the Admiralty, the Treasury (through the Custom House), and the Post Office. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Lord Warden nominated to one seat, and this custom so much tended to harden into a regular privilege that in 1689 an Act of Parliament was deemed necessary to declare its illegality.² Still, the influence of the Lord Warden survived, especially at Hythe and Dover. There was, however, also a strong independent element in the borough, and early in the eighteenth century a leading local family, the Papillons, appear among its representa-

¹ Add. MSS. 34734, f. 353.

² See George Wilks, *The Barons of the Cinque Ports and the Parliamentary Representation of Hythe* (1892). In February 1613-14 Lord Northampton, the Lord Warden, claimed it to be "the auncient usage and privilege that my selfe and my predecessors have ever had in the noiacon [nomination] of one of the Barons to be elected in the severall ports . . ." (*ibid.* p. 66); and in 1683 Colonel Strode, by order from the King, reminded the Corporation of Hythe of the privilege "which the former Lord Wardens have ever enjoy'd . . . 'The power or pre-eminence of recommending one of the Barons . . . to be elected for each of the ports'" (p. 88). But the Act of 1689 declared "that all such nominations or recommendations were and are contrary to the law and constitution of this realm" (pp. 89-90). There were other great Royal officers who in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries enjoyed similar privileges; see, e.g., Sir Richard Worsley, *History of the Isle of Wight* (1781), for its Governor's claims in its boroughs; Pink and Beaven, *The Parliamentary Representation of Lancashire*, for the Chancellor of the Duchy nominating in the sixteenth century to one seat at Liverpool; etc. Lecky's wrong assumption that the Duchy of Cornwall exercised an important influence in Cornish boroughs in 1761 (see *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. iii. p. 29) is probably based on similar privileges possessed by its officials in an earlier age.

tives. Later on, Dover was brought into very close connexion with the Government through the person of Lord Hardwicke, its Recorder and Steward 1718-64, who himself

was strongly attached to his native town of Dover, and to the old friends of his family in that place and neighbourhood, such as the Papillons, the Plumptres, the Russells, the Minets, the Wellards, the Gunmans, with whom he kept up an unbroken correspondence. He was constantly visited by them, and many from these families received his invaluable support at their start in life, or during the progress of their careers.¹

Although Dover naturally benefited by this connexion, sentiment played the chief part in it, and when the Government took to sending the Corporation what one disappointed candidate properly described as a *congé d'élire*,² they were soon reminded of the limitations to their influence.

Philip Minet, of a leading Huguenot family at Dover, wrote to Hardwicke on April 22, 1756 :

The seat in Parliament which late Mr. Burrell occupied being vacant, I should be glad to know if your Lordship has any person particularly to recommend . . . ; any body from your Lordship would meet with success, but as the good people my townsmen have been much disgusted at persons being named, sent downe and recommended, by the Ministry with very little notice or time given them, they and a great number would gladly embrace a person who would oppose such. It might be therefore necessary his Grace the

¹ See Philip C. Yorke, *Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke*, vol. ii. p. 563.

² Peter Burrell, jun., wrote to Newcastle on April 16, 1756 :

You may run some risque ; . . . there are 800 voters, many of whom are ripe for opposition, many more kept steady by the Duke [of Dorset, then Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports] and Lord George Sackville, they expect some connection between them and their candidates and a *congé d'élire* may be a dangerous experiment . . . (Add. MSS. 32864, ff. 298-9).

See also letter from Lord George Sackville to the Duke of Newcastle, April 17, 1756 (*ibid.* f. 314).

Duke of Newcastle should fix on some person agreeable to the towne.¹

Minet's letter concluded with the suggestion that either Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Hardwicke's son-in-law, or H. V. Jones, Hardwicke's nephew and private secretary to Newcastle, would be a suitable candidate. Similarly, John Sauré, Assistant Agent of the Packet Boats, wrote from Dover on April 20 :

. . . The distiqueshd loyalty of this place has for many years past induced us to pay the greatest regard to the recommendations of the Ministry on such occasions, having allway chose such as they recommended, though intirely strangers to us ; hy these methods (without any ways consulting the inclinations of the Corporation) I fear the Ministry will in time loose their influence here and indeed I may venture to say, so much of it is allready gone amongst the common freemen (and I am perswaded for no other reasons than above) that if any gentleman of fortune and carractor that is known to this Corporation should offer at this time to oppose a person sent down that we know nothing of, and that has no natural inclination as well as interest to serve us, I realy fear the consequence.

We have above 800 voters and tho many of them are biased by their places and other ways influenced, yet a great majority I beleive are independent ; would it not therefore he prudent in the Ministry at this time to indolge us in their approhation of Mr. Jones . . . when we consider the station Mr. Jones is in, we think it the greatest compliment we can pay to his Grace of Newcastle, and we conceive very agreeable to my Lord Chancellor. . . .²

Newcastle at first had asked the "friends of the Government . . . not to engage themselves",³ meaning next to recommend to them his candidate ; but when, in a very

¹ Add. MSS. 35692, f. 360.

² *Ibid.* f. 343. The letter is not to Hardwicke, for it starts "Sir", nor does it seem to be addressed to H. V. Jones. It is, however, now among the Hardwicke Papers. Jones, too, was a native of Dover.

³ Newcastle to Barham, Agent of the Dover Packet Boats, April 17, 1756 ; Add. MSS. 32364, f. 322.

dutiful letter, his own agent at Dover transmitted the suggestion of Jones's candidature,¹ Newcastle readily accepted it. In 1759, Edward Simpson, Judge of the Cinque Ports, was returned, at Hardwicke's recommendation, in the place of Jones, and when in 1761 Lord George Sackville, who had sat for Dover since 1741, moved to Hythe, the Town Council "by general consent" offered his seat to Sir Joseph Yorke, Minister at the Hague,² and on February 17, 1761, the Duke of Dorset, the Warden of the Cinque Ports, wrote to them "recommending Sir Edward Simpson to represent this town again in Parliament and expressing his best wishes for the success of General Yorke".³ The fine distinction should be noted between the rights which obviously the Lord Warden still claimed with regard to one seat, and his concurrence in the choice made by others for the second.

Thus in populous boroughs, even such as were of "distiqueshd loyalty", Government influence had to be exercised with a certain discretion; but such niceties are completely lost in the summaries compiled by reformers from which most of the information concerning the *unreformed Parliament* is derived.

Boroughs with about 500 Voters

Some of these eleven boroughs did not differ much in social structure from the medium-sized type, others came near that of pocket borough, and in all of them alike election contests were rare—only three went to the poll in 1754 and none in 1761. They formed a very heterogeneous collection. Hertford was a rather dignified constituency with a large Nonconformist vote; local families of rich business men

¹ Add. MSS. 35692, f. 345. This letter, obviously forwarded by Newcastle to Hardwicke, is now among the Hardwicke Papers; see Newcastle's reply, *ibid.* f. 358; further, in the Newcastle Papers, a letter from Barham, dated April 25, 1756; Add. MSS. 32864, f. 399.

² Add. MSS. 35692, f. 438.

³ *Ibid.* f. 394.

were practically in control of the borough. In 1761 one Member was a rich brewer, John Calvert, and the other, Timothy Caswall, an officer in the Guards, was the nominee and successor of his uncle, a prominent banker, Nicholas Brassey. Aylesbury was corrupt and well within the radius of London official and commercial influences; in 1761 one of its Members was Welbore Ellis, a placeman of Irish extraction and son-in-law of Sir William Stanhope, who had considerable influence in Buckinghamshire, and the other the famous John Wilkes, the son of a London distiller, descended on both sides from pious Nonconformists; on his expulsion he was succeeded by Anthony Bacon, a London merchant. Rochester was considered an Admiralty borough, Sandwich was under the influence of the Admiralty, the Treasury, and some Kentish neighbours. At Berwick-on-Tweed the main influence was in the Corporation itself. Peterborough was under the influence of neighbouring squires and of its own town notables; in 1761 Sir Matthew Lamb, whose brother Robert was Dean of Peterborough, 1744-64, and its bishop, 1764-1769, was one of its Members.¹ At Taunton the local Nonconformists had a considerable influence and in 1754 applied to Newcastle to provide them with a candidate "most agreeable to His Majesty and most likily readily to go thro' with the necessary expence of securing his elec-

¹ The father of Sir Matthew Lamb, first Bart. (1755), had been land agent to the family of Coke, of Melbourne, Derbyshire, and Matthew married the heiress of that family. He also inherited "a large fortune" (according to the *Historical Register*, £100,000) from his uncle, Peniston Lamb, a barrister. He himself was confidential adviser to Lords Salisbury and Egmont and was said to have "feathered his nest pretty handsomely at their expense" (see A. Hayward, *Sketches of Eminent Statesmen and Writers* (1880), vol. i. p. 332). He is said to have left a million pounds. His son, Sir Peniston Lamb, second Bart., M.P., and subsequently first Lord Melbourne, occupies a prominent place in the Memoirs of Mrs. Baddeley, a well-known courtesan, while his wife was much admired by the Prince of Wales (George IV). The second Lord Melbourne was the famous Prime Minister.

tion".¹ Situated in the cloth-manufacturing district, even about the middle of the eighteenth century, Taunton occasionally returned local business men, and towards the end of the century became an exclusive preserve of rich bankers and merchants. Of the remaining four boroughs, Stamford was under the influence of Lord Exeter and other neighbouring big landowners; Newcastle-under-Lyme under that of the Leveson-Gowers; Wareham of various local squires (the Pitts, Bankeses, and Draxes, who all finished by selling their Wareham property to J. Calcraft); whilst at Chichester, although the town was fairly independent, the Duke of Richmond, the owner of the neighbouring estate of Goodwood, exercised a considerable influence.

To strengthen it, the young Duke of Richmond in 1757 asked Newcastle that at Chichester he should be allowed to "name to the places depending on the Treasury and Customhouse", and on another occasion extended his claim even to its ecclesiastical preferments. He wrote to Newcastle on August 26, 1757: "I shall be willing to take the recommendations of any of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, but lett me have the doing of it".² And again on October 29, 1758: ". . . I hope that your Grace will allow all the recommendations to go thro' me. This is what my father allways did. I think I have a right to it, and it is among the very few favours I ask of your Grace."³ Finally, in November 1758, Richmond thus expounded his theory of patronage to John Page, M.P. for Chichester (it curiously resembles that which now in the United States invests Federal Senators with the Government patronage in their own States while their party is in office):

That he believed it was the general custom with Ministers to make that compliment to the person of the highest rank in the country and living near to the place in which he cultivated an interest in order to strengthen that interest, which the power of disposing

¹ Add. MSS. 32736, f. 25.

² Add. MSS. 32873, f. 293.

³ Add. MSS. 32885, f. 118.

of places would always greatly contribute to, unless the principles of such persons was suspected with respect to the Government.

The counter-claim to official favours which Page produced in reply to Richmond's *exposé* seems worth reproducing, for it was the answer of one of the comparatively few Whigs left in Parliament who were Whigs by principles and not for profit, as far as their own persons were concerned :

After hearing him with all the patience he himself could think due to his quality, I presumed to tell him ; that I had served near thirty years in Parliament ; that I could prove myself a poorer man by fourteen or fifteen thousand pounds in consequence of it ; that I never had any employment under the Crown, nor any private pecuniary reward from any Minister, though in general a friend to them.

Lastly, he mentioned that before the general election of 1754 Henry Pelham, to induce him to stand again, had promised him a share in recommendations to vacant posts at Chichester.¹

The Narrow Constituencies

It is extremely difficult to give any coherent account of the remaining 149 boroughs ; but when even the most considerable constituencies, such as Bristol, treated their Members primarily as agents called upon to secure their specific interests, one cannot wonder if in towns with a very restricted electorate the remunerative capacities of the vote were even more marked and were turned even more to the profit of individuals. The ideas of the time closely connected franchise and representation with property, and gradually the vote and seat themselves tended to become

¹ John Page to the Duke of Newcastle, November 22, 1758 ; Add. MSS. 32885, ff. 507-8. For other correspondence on this subject, see Add. MSS. 32873, f. 422 ; 32875, f. 407 ; 32885, ff. 155, 174-6 ; 32886, f. 181.

realty, like an advowson, sublime in its ultimate significance, beneficial in practice to its owner.

Patronage being the produce of the franchise, it was desirable that the professional character of the Members should, if possible, harmonise with that of the borough. Thus towns on the coast showed a preference for naval officers, not only because of the glamour of their exploits at sea. When in 1747 Dr. Ayscough, secretary to Frederick, Prince of Wales, encouraged William Lemon, a Cornish mine-owner,¹ to fight the Boscawen interest at Truro, Lemon replied :

The majority of the electors here are so attached to the Tregothnan family by the behaviour of Captain Boscawen, and his taking some of their sons to sea with him, that the attempt you advise me to make in this place would, I am persuaded, prove fruitless.²

On a vacancy at Chichester, in 1755, John Page, to prepare the ground for Keppel, a cousin of the young Duke of Richmond, discoursed at the coffee-house that it would be reasonable for the town to accept the recommendation of the Duke's guardians,

and that the person would, from the reason of things be Commodore Keppel, to whom I would, in that case, give my vote, not only upon account of the recommendation, but because of the Commodore's merits as a good officer, and a rising man in the Navy where he would be able and, if chosen, willing to serve the sons of his friends who should go into the sea service.³

The style in which requests were sometimes addressed to naval commanders can be seen from the following letter

¹ About "the great Mr. Lemon", who was "the principal merchant and tin smelter of Cornwall", see *Parochial History of Cornwall*, vol. ii. pp. 67-8. He held from Frederick, Prince of Wales, "a grant for a term of years of the dues on all minerals and metals (tin excepted) which he might cause to be discovered within the Duchy lands of Cornwall and Devon".

² *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Fortescue MSS., vol. i. p. 109.

³ Add. MSS. 32852, ff. 7-8.

which on the eve of the general election of 1761, Luxmore, the manager of Okehampton, wrote to Rodney :

I understand that you are now about to have the *Marlborough* as a fix'd ship, and beg leave to remind you of your promise to me, to make Joe Hunt your Captain, so soon as you had one. . . . I have therefore wrote Mr. Hunt's friends that as the *Marlborough* will be soon ready for you, he may depend upon being her captain for that I had your promise long ago.¹

Rodney thereupon wrote to Robert Andrews, the London manager for Okehampton :

On my arrival here I received the enclosed letter . . . and as I know Lord Anson will not oblige me in this affair, hope you will lay it before his Grace of N——le that he may insist upon it with his Lordship, in case his Grace should intend that I serve again for Okehampton.²

But as Rodney now stood for Penryn and not for Okehampton, Captain Peard, a freeman of Penryn "whose friends have great influence", supplanted Joe Hunt as his candidate for the captaincy in the *Marlborough*.³

Almost as welcome as admirals in the naval boroughs were Secretaries to the Admiralty such as Cleveland, M.P. for Saltash, 1741-43 and 1761-63, and Sandwich, 1747-61, and Philip Stephens, M.P. for Sandwich, 1768-1806, or distinguished Admiralty lawyers such as Edward Simpson, M.P. for Dover, 1759-64, and Dr. George Hay, M.P. for Sandwich, 1761-68.⁴ Oldfield thus describes the

¹ December 14, 1760; Add. MSS. 32916, f. 257.

² December 19; *ibid.* f. 255. Both these letters were forwarded by Andrews to the Duke of Newcastle with a covering letter of December 22; *ibid.* f. 253. For previous correspondence between Newcastle and Anson about Lieut. Hunt and Okehampton, see pp. 43-4.

³ See p. 390.

⁴ James Marriott, of Doctors' Commons, another lawyer practising in the Admiralty courts (in 1764 he succeeded Dr. Hay as Advocate-General), asked Newcastle in a letter of January 20, 1761, to promote his candidature for Aldborough in Suffolk—"this horough . . . being maritime, I hope I can always be of use to my constituents in my profession" (Add. MSS. 32917, f. 447).

position of the Sandwich freemen at the end of the thirty-eight years for which Stephens had been their representative in Parliament :

The voters were bound to this gentleman by every tie of gratitude, as there is scarcely a single family connected with Sandwich, which has not been provided for by him in the admiralty, navy or marines.¹

Merchants constituted the most serious competition to sailors in maritime boroughs. About Fowey Lord Edgcumbe remarked, in December 1761, that Captain Walsingham, R.N., would do better in the borough than Mr. Earle (an official of the Ordnance), but that the people "would rather have a merchant than either";² the opponent was a merchant who tried to win the borough by promising to promote its trade. Thus also Sir Samuel Fludyer, a leading cloth merchant, established a strong interest at Chippenham, in the cloth-manufacturing district of Wiltshire. In the London commercial directories of 1738-63 his firm appeared as "Samuel and Thomas Fludyer", and in 1769 it became "Fludyer, Marsh & Hudson"; Sir Samuel Fludyer sat for Chippenham from 1754 till his death in 1768; his brother, Sir Thomas, from 1768 till his death in 1769; their brother-in-law, Samuel Marsh, 1774-80, and Giles Hudson from 1780 till his death in 1783—the borough remained in the firm. Nathaniel Newnham, when trying to establish himself at Ashburton, wrote to Newcastle on May 26, 1760 :

I . . . am satisfied that the great services I have already done and may do that borough in promoting the exportation of its manufactures has procured me several staunch friends there. . . .³

At New Shoreham, a place famous for corruption,⁴ the cor-

¹ *Key to the House of Commons*, p. 247.

² See pp. 395-6.

³ Add. MSS. 32906, f. 285.

⁴ New Shoreham was the first borough to be disfranchised for corruption, in 1771 its representation being thrown into the rape of Bramber. For an early case of very open bribery at Shoreham (about

porate interests of the town also received due consideration in the choice of Members. On September 25, 1766, in a letter to Newcastle signed by 80 out of its 136 voters, they recounted how at his recommendation they had elected Admiral Cornish—"and we were much delighted with the Admiral's generosity to us since that happened"—but with regard to the forthcoming general election they humbly hoped "that one of the gentlemen your Grace pleases to name may have it in his power to assist in building merchant vessells, it being the chief manufacture of this borough . . ." ¹

Most striking of all is the case of Tiverton as related by its historian, Martin Dunsford,² a local cloth merchant who towards the end of the century became the leader of a movement for extending its franchise. In 1765 the death of Oliver Peard, the political manager of Tiverton and "one of the principal merchants" in the town,

who had conducted an extensive woollen trade, by which a considerable part of the poor inhabitants had been employed many years, occasioned not only a present general stagnation of business, but great fears among the labourers, that the trade itself would be removed elsewhere . . . unless some other merchant, of fortune and capacity, could be influenced to settle in Tiverton. They therefore applied, in a body, to the Mayor and corporation, to request them to elect Mr. Charles Baring,³ a considerable merchant of Exon, to fill one of three vacancies then in the corporation, as

100 electors actually received "£20 appiece" with a promise of "20 more"), see letter from William Michell to Newcastle, November 8, 1753 (Add. MSS. 32733, f. 222); "I never heard of any things being done in so publick a manner".

¹ Add. MSS. 32977, f. 163.

² In his *Historical Memoirs of the Town and Parish of Tiverton* (1790), pp. 245-52. About Dunsford see M. L. Banks, *Blundell's Worthies* (1904), pp. 89-97.

³ Fourth son of John Baring (who was the first of the family to settle in England, as cloth manufacturer and merchant, at Larkbeer, near Exeter) and younger brother of John Baring, M.P. for Exeter, 1776-1800, and of Sir Francis Baring, first Bart., M.P.

he . . . had offered to reside in the town, and conduct a considerable woollen trade in it. . . .

The majority of the Corporation were at first willing to do so, but subsequently the Mayor and his party changed their minds, giving as a reason that

Mr. Baring had expressed his intention to have his brother and friend also elected to fill the other two vacancies, and to lay the members of the corporation under obligation to him in trade; and by these means to engross the sole interest and direction of the corporation . . . and get himself or brother chosen one of the representatives in Parliament for the borough. . . .

When the wool-combers, weavers, etc., learnt of the change in the Mayor's attitude, grave disorders ensued which finally resulted in the sacking of the Mayor's house, much destruction in his works and fulling mills, agreements between combers and weavers never in future to work for any members of the Corporation who did not vote for Baring, etc. The further transactions, which supply an extraordinarily interesting picture of economic and social conditions in the cloth-manufacturing country, need not detain us here. The political situation alone concerns us, of which these were the main elements: the chief attraction which Tiverton had for Baring was obviously that it returned Members to Parliament; the Corporation, in which the franchise was vested, consisted of smaller merchants who would have welcomed him as a leader and friend but feared him as a master; whilst the "labouring poor", who had no vote either in the choice of the Corporation or of Members of Parliament, tried to force the Corporation to deliver the borough to Baring in the hope that he would provide them with employment.

Besides patronage and trade, public works were among the most usual corporate interests secured at elections. About 1750 Tewkesbury suffered severely from the deplorable condition of its roads, some "so narrow that

two horses could scarcely pass each other; others . . . so deep in mud that the travelling public made tracks in the adjoining fields".¹ Under the leadership of "persons of property in the borough" a club was therefore formed in 1753 to use the forthcoming general election for a scheme of public utility. In a letter in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* on January 20, 1753, Lord Gage, who had represented the borough since 1721 and claimed that he had neither bought his constituents nor sold them for selfish purposes, raised the following complaint:

I must own myself greatly mortified to find many of my friends engaged in a scheme, which, if persisted in, must deprive me of the honour of representing them; although I flatter myself their resolution to choose no members but such as will give £1500 each towards mending their roads, does not proceed from any personal dislike to me, but from the benefit they conceive the trade of Tewkesbury will receive by it.²

And as Lord Gage refused to accede to these terms, he and his son Thomas (subsequently Commander-in-Chief in America) were defeated by John Martin, a partner in the well-known London bank at the sign of the Grasshopper, and Nicolson Calvert, a London brewer, who "made their public entry into the town with pickaxes and shovels carried before them, and flags, with inscriptions thereon, of 'Calvert and Martin' on one side, and 'good roads' on the other. . . ."

Or again, the following account from Newport in the Isle of Wight was sent by Ralph Jenison to Henry Pelham on February 18, 1754:

The people of that place have taken the opportunity of paving their town against a general election and Mr. Holmes [the Government manager] says the candidates are to pay for it, that and the

¹ See "J. T.", "Tewkesbury Politics in 1753", in the *Gloucestershire Notes and Queries*, vol. v. (1891-93), pp. 509-11.

² *Ibid.*

expence at the day of election and some gratuities to particular people, will amount to six hundred pound for each candidate, which Mr. Holmes desires may be paid into his hands before he leaves London.¹

At Oxford,² on May 12, 1766, the Mayor and Aldermen addressed a letter to Robert Lee, one of their Members, describing the distressed condition of the city, which had a debt of £5670, and offering to re-elect him and his colleague if they discharged it. At the same time, they expressed their indignation at some unauthorised "person or persons" who had "taken upon themselves to expose the city to a person in London", and stated that, should their sitting Members refuse to advance the money,

the whole council are determined to apply to some other person or persons in the county to do it, and if possible, by that means, to keep themselves from being sold to foreigners.³

The editor of the *Parliamentary History* adds the remark that it was

generally affirmed, and as generally believed, that the gentlemen who signed this letter . . . were not actuated by any motives of self-interest, and that they only meant to benefit the corporation in general by their request.

The methods employed in the management of narrow corporations and the terms in which their "politics" were transacted will be analysed at length in the chapters on the Cornish boroughs and on Harwich and Orford, while examples of fairly free boroughs with a strong tradition of heredity in representation will be found in the chapter on Shropshire. Here, I merely add an

¹ Add. MSS. 32734, ff. 148-9.

² Oxford was not one of the "narrow constituencies", but the following action of its corporation is typical of practices adopted by many a corporation borough.

³ See *Parliamentary History*, vol. xvi. p. 398; "foreigner" here is of course used in contradistinction to gentlemen of the county.

extreme example of a burgage borough, and I choose Clitheroe, where a conflict in 1780 gives the terms in which such Parliamentary seats were discussed.

There were 102 burgages at Clitheroe entitled to a vote in elections. In 1717, on the death of Sir Ralph Assheton, whose family had frequently represented the borough in the seventeenth century,¹ his sons-in-law, Thomas Lister and Nathaniel Curzon, "became possessed of a very considerable joint property" and of four burgages at Clitheroe which they continued to hold in common. After the contested election of 1722 they jointly bought the 37 burgages of their defeated opponents,² and such purchases were continued until the joint holding comprised 53 burgages, "a majority of the whole" which converted "what was before scarcely a reasonable chance of representing the borough sometimes, into an absolute certainty of representing it for ever".³ From 1722 till 1780 the two families equally shared its representation, but in 1780 Thomas Lister (subsequently first Lord Ribblesdale), having increased his separate holding from 13 to 30 burgages, played a peculiar trick on his partner, Assheton Curzon (subsequently first Viscount Curzon). The total number of burgages being 102, if the joint 53 were annihilated, Lister's separate 30 would be a majority of the remaining 49, and then he could fill both seats, paying no attention to Curzon; he achieved this by refusing to concur in the conveyances of the joint property which were required for creating nominal voters for the election, *i.e.* after the Curzons had spent their share of money on joint purchases, Lister deprived Curzon "of the natural

¹ Another member of the same family, Mr. Ralph Assheton, represented Clitheroe in Parliament, 1868-80.

² The sum paid for 31 of these 37 burgages was only £2950.

³ The account given above is based on two pamphlets published in 1781, an *Apology for the Conduct of Thomas Lister, Esq., respecting the Borough of Clitheroe*, and *An Answer to the Apology*, etc.

advantages of his property for his own benefit". One can well understand the indignation of the Curzon family, but in neither account of the transaction is it remembered that the object discussed in such absolutely proprietary terms was the representation of a borough in Parliament. And when the Lister side tried to belittle the solidity of the Curzon interest in the borough, it was pointed out by their opponents, as proof of its real strength, that William Curzon, Member for Clitheroe, 1734-47, "was a stranger in the borough and . . . never paid the compliment of attending at his own election".

From my knowledge, limited to one period, I naturally am not able to draw wide conclusions; detailed information would be required about earlier periods in order to judge how this peculiar condition of things had come to exist. So much, however, seems clear that, besides the absence of true political or religious issues (it is the latter which stir most the average plain man), there was a curious lack of correlation in the growth of the English political organism. Power to exercise decisive influence in problems of national importance was vested in an electorate not equal to comprehending them, and in the absence of organised parties, that power was used primarily to satisfy local or even personal needs. Seeing how the Members were selected, one can only wonder that the results were not worse than they were (but the same might be said even to-day when, what we at least consider to be, a clean Parliament and a clean Government arise from party funds and organisations thinking almost exclusively in terms of "vote-catching"). Naturally the ridiculous state of the franchise in the majority of boroughs tended to further the proprietary type of politics, whilst in turn the "proprietary" politics, prevalent even in most of the big and free borough constituencies, explain why the unreformed franchise was suffered to continue so long. Seeing the purpose for which the unenfranchised popula-

tion of Tiverton wished to use the Parliamentary representation of the borough, is there anything morally repugnant in the proprietary claim of those who held it?

Eighteenth-century politics and elections may seem quaint to those who assume that present-day party politics, caucuses, and election stunts are "normal", and that any other system is curious and extraordinary. But in reality they all are based on the simple fact that the aim in Parliamentary elections is not the mental and moral uplifting of the electorate, but the acquisition of seats; and once a strictly defined purpose is set to human activities, once they are fixed in definite forms, a ritual develops at the expense of devotion. The forms acquire an independent life of their own, grow and become complex, and the original meaning or purpose is forgotten; the Tibetans are not the only people to employ praying wheels. The correlation of human activities with their avowed purposes is in most spheres so dim and uncertain (think, *e.g.*, of education) that one wonders how anything is ever achieved. Still, the answer is simple: if in most tasks humanity scores three marks in a thousand, and learns by experience to consider this a fair average, only with regard to periods widely different from our own are we able to perceive the missing 997 points. The result of any electoral system is a House consisting of individuals representative, not so much because they have passed through a peculiar and possibly altogether irrelevant system of "election", but because they belong to circles which are primarily concerned with the nation's political business and form therefore what may be called the political nation.

PATRONAGE

I feel it incumbent on me, in conclusion of this chapter, to attempt a synopsis of the state of representation and patronage in England at the accession of George III.

But the more one knows about the internal condition of boroughs (as about the characters of men) the more difficult it is to classify them. Weather-charts are neatest and most comprehensible where there are no proper stations for observation. To this it might be objected that the reformers of 1790-1832 drew up many a clear and exhaustive chart of representation, though they were undoubtedly well-informed. But then their purpose was to show up the absurdities of the system, and they did not therefore mind glossing over difficulties and stating the case in bald, plain, unqualified terms; a student of history hesitates to proceed in the same rough and ready manner. I therefore wish to re-state once more certain difficulties which should be boldly faced before they are passed over.

There were few places, such as Old Sarum, which could in unqualified terms be put down as absolutely and irrevocably under the command of one man, his heirs or assigns. In most cases "control" meant merely a command so complete that it required exceptional negligence or ill-luck on the part of the owner to be deprived of it. Still, cases of that kind did occur, and there was almost always room for anxiety, even in the case of burghage boroughs over which the hold of the owner was usually most secure. In 1761 any one would have declared Horsham the downright property of the Ingram family. Their hold on it was shaken and ultimately destroyed when the eleventh Duke of Norfolk, lord of the manor of Horsham, who had conformed to the Church of England, developed an interest in boroughs.¹ Boroughbridge was (and remained) the property of the Dukes of Newcastle; and yet in 1763 Lord Lincoln, Newcastle's heir-apparent, suddenly became hysterical over it:

. . . If you have any regard my dearest Lord, for my *tolerable ease* of mind [he wrote to Newcastle on March 19, 1763] for God's sake!

¹ See W. Albery, *A Parliamentary History of Horsham* (1927).

dont forget what you have promis'd me, if something is not done now, depend upon it, the borough is lost to your family for ever.¹

At Beeralston the majority of burgages were the property of Sir F. H. Drake, fifth Baronet, and the Earl of Buckinghamshire. But attention was required, and in October 1741, Rowe, Drake's chief agent and a friend of the family, wrote to the young baronet, then at Cambridge, about attempts made to split holdings and propose fresh burgages :

If they multiply tenants upon you in this manner and a dispute arises, you can have no relief but in St. Stephen's Chapel. It therefore behoves you to look about betimes and to make yourself master as soon as possible at least of election law. . . . Not knowing what may happen, you should always be present at the choosing the Portreeve, to keep your friends together and, though you are not of age, to let them know how soon you shall be. . . . Keep the trust of the parish lands as long in yourself as you can and don't let complaisance draw from you what you have a power to keep. . . .²

One might perhaps best sum up the position in the burgage boroughs by saying that they nearest approached complete control, as the basis for it was in the property itself, and not in influence over persons. But even there the hold was not absolute, because in view of the complexities and intricacies of electoral law, the title to the "property" was seldom perfectly clear and unassailable.

Where human beings were concerned, there never

¹ Add. MSS. 33067, f. 347. For Newcastle's reassuring reply see Add. MSS. 32947, ff. 263-4 : "I shall not lose sight of the object . . . but it must be done in a gentle, quiet way and not by force. . . ." The question was of burgages belonging to the family of Andrew Wilkinson, Newcastle's manager. For further correspondence about them see Add. MSS. 32965, ff. 97 and 189 ; finally this question of the Boroughbridge burgages was one of the factors which produced the break between Lord Lincoln and the Duke of Newcastle in 1766.

² See Lady Elliott-Drake, *The Family and Heirs of Sir Francis Drake*, vol. ii. pp. 244-5.

could be absolute certainty. Grampound was always talked about in proprietary terms; but (as is shown in the chapter on Cornish boroughs) in 1758 it suddenly "renounced the name" of its patrons, the Edgcumbes, and put itself under different management. Truro was a stronghold of the Boscawens which for a long time no one ever thought of contesting; but when in 1780 Basset, one of the richest mine-owners in Cornwall, attacked the Falmouth interest, the Corporation of Truro suddenly discovered that "the interference of any Peer of Parliament in the election of Members of the Lower House is illegal, and subversive of the very essence of our Constitution", and declared that they would elect Bamber Gascoyne and Henry Rosewarne, a local merchant, "freely, and without expence" to them.¹ Lord Shelburne purchased Calne from Duckett and Northey in 1763-65,² and henceforth it was deemed his pocket borough³—but a candidate was elected against his will in 1807. Even the Duke of Newcastle lost a candidate at Lewes in 1768, though it must be added that the Duke's illness, the incoherence of his actions at that time, the division in his own family coupled with the imminence of his death and the consequent change of owners, contributed to that result. Totnes was, in 1761, reckoned a Government borough, though the hold on the Corporation was never very

¹ See P. Jennings, "Notes on the Parliamentary History of Truro", *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, vol. xix. (1913), p. 232. But lest anyone suspect in this opposition a symptom of political discontent at the close of the American war, the praise should be noted which they gave to Gascoyne for having "shown himself an able and steady Member in support of his Majesty and his Government (a conduct which, if generally pursued, we incline to think, would be most likely to put a speedy end to the present calamitous war, already lengthened by our unhappy divisions). . . ."

² See my essay on "Thomas Duckett and Daniel Bull, Members for Calne", *Wiltshire Archaeol. Mag.*, June 1928.

³ After the Reform Act of 1832, Calne was represented by the Earl of Kerry, 1832-36, by the Earl of Shelburne, 1847-56, and by Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, 1868-85, when it was merged in the county.

strong; ¹ by 1783, when John Robinson was compiling his chart of boroughs for George III, no trace was left of Government management at Totnes. Portsmouth, a corporation borough, for many years accepted the Admiralty's recommendations for both its seats, but about 1774, under the leadership of a prominent local man, John Carter, a revolt was started in the Corporation (largely by the Dissenters) which assumed a real political character and seriously endangered the hold of the Admiralty upon it. ²

In fact, there was no absolute certainty where there were

¹ Charles Frederick, an official of the Ordnance and M.P. for Queensborough, in a letter dated Dartmouth, August 30, 1754, wrote about Totnes:

The Government interest is very precarious in that borough, its whole strength depends on one vote among the aldermen, therefore if one of our friends should dye before the chusing of a new mayor or one of the aldermen in the Government interest can be bought off, it is gone out of the Ministry's hands. Lord William Seymour . . . has offered Mr. Vavasor, an alderman of Totnes, £700 for his vote, this Vavasor is very poor, has a large family, and consequently is to be doubted where the temptation is so considerable, however he has promised he will be very firm, provided he is forgiven a debt of £271 which the Navy have against him . . . (Add. MSS. 32736, ff. 382-3).

² See Lake Allen, *The History of Portsmouth* (1817), R. J. Murrell and R. East, *Extracts from the Records of the Borough of Portsmouth* (1884), and P. A. Taylor, *Some Account of the Taylor Family* (1875). There is also much valuable information about Portsmouth affairs in the Sandwich MSS. at Hinchinbrooke. The true political character of the movement is established by Thomas Binsteed, Lord Sandwich's agent, telling him with reference to a proposed Address to the King concerning America: ". . . if the Address were to be made to the Deity, and originate from our side, Mr. Carter and his party would oppose it" (letter of November 6, 1775). Compare with this the dictum of one of the least partisan among present-day Conservative leaders, who thus explained an unexpected action of his own: "If the Opposition moved the Ten Commandments as amendment to the Address, the best Christian among the Conservatives would have to vote against them".

any real voters, and there was no keeping them without constant attention, expense, importuning of Ministers in their behalf, entertaining them, pleasing their wives and daughters,¹ kissing their babies: in short, all the things which to this day make the nursing of a constituency the next worst occupation to touting for advertisements.

One last serious difficulty which should be noted with regard to classification of boroughs arises from the confusion of private "interests" with Government influence. Few extensive electoral interests could be maintained except with the help of Government patronage lavished at the recommendation of the borough patrons; whilst influence in Government boroughs had to be managed through Ministers and local agents, who more often than not tried to get away with them. The condition of Government boroughs and the methods of managing them are more fully described in the chapter on Harwich and Orford, which in 1761 were the two Treasury boroughs *par excellence*, though that did not prevent Newcastle a year later from hoping that he would be able to retain influence in them even after he had ceased to be its First Lord. It is more difficult to define the position in boroughs where the Government influence was closely intertwined with some original private interest of a Minister or agent who managed them on behalf of the Government. This was the position of Newcastle in the Sussex boroughs of Seaford, Hastings, and Rye, of the

¹ Cf., e.g., election accounts at Grampound in 1754: to each freeman's wife, "and where no wife to his eldest daughter", one guinea "to buy a ring"; p. 432. Robert Maxwell, on August 8, 1754, after his return to London, thus described his electioneering at Taunton in a letter to Lord G. Sackville: "I arrived here last night from Taunton after a great deal of smoaking, some drinking, and kissing some hundreds of women; but it was to good purpose. . . . I may venture to say that I have now near 150 majority . . ." (*Stopford Sackville MSS., Hist. MSS. Comm., 9th Report, pt. iii. p. 131*). He got elected, but for the cash expenditure on that election from secret service funds, see pp. 256 and 525-33.

Duke of Dorset at Hythe, and of Lord Holmes in the three boroughs of the Isle of Wight. It may be seen in the case of the Sussex boroughs how difficult it is to draw a line between the two interests, especially after they had been treated as identical for some forty years. Newcastle's relation to all three was more or less the same, but by 1768 he had lost Hastings, because its manager, Edward Milward, considered himself bound to the Treasury and not to Newcastle; he retained Rye, because its manager, Thomas Lamb, took the opposite view; and he was able to save one seat at Seaford by concluding a compromise with an independent candidate, and because the Duke of Grafton, then First Lord of the Treasury, did not press an opposition against him. With regard to all three boroughs, Newcastle behaved as if they were his allodial possessions, and not fiefs he held *quâ* Minister of the Crown; *e.g.*, in 1761 he felt it necessary to make excuses to Hastings for not recommending a Pelham—"I should with pleasure now recommend one of my own family to you, had there been any one capable at present of representing you".¹ Part of his influence in these boroughs still survived in 1768, by force of personal loyalties and regards, but none passed to his heirs on his death, which occurred shortly after that general election.²

The Government Interest

It is impossible numerically to express the size of the "Government interest"; it pervaded practically the entire country—"that . . . power which every one who proposes to establish an interest in a Corporation town is desirous of having on his side"³—whilst on the other hand

¹ Add. MSS. 32920, f. 369.

² Thomas Pelham of Stanmer, who now became Lord Pelham, at first claimed an influence at Seaford (see Add. MSS. 33088, ff. 292, 294, 302-4, 310, 319, and 327), but ultimately was not able to maintain it.

³ See p. 136.

it was hardly anywhere unalloyed, and, like all electoral "interests", was changing and shifting, receding in one quarter and invading new ground in another, developing when looked after or decaying rapidly when neglected. Even in the places which most specifically went by the name of Government boroughs, it can be fixed by a snapshot only, and then naturally all kinds of accidental features enter into the picture ; and that of 1761 is no longer true in 1780, nay, not even in 1768.

Harwich and Orford were in 1761 the two safest Treasury boroughs ; Seaford, Hastings, and Rye were under the Treasury and the Duke of Newcastle. At Dover the Government (in this case a very complex entity) can be said to have held one seat. Five seats in three Isle of Wight boroughs were at the disposal of the Treasury with a first lien on them for the family of Lord Holmes, the Government manager ; about Dartmouth, I am not clear whether it was under the Treasury or the Admiralty, but I believe it was under the former ; into Totnes the Treasury could import one Member, whilst the other seat had to be filled by someone with local connexions. These were nineteen seats managed directly by the Treasury without the candidates having to "undertake" them.

The Cornish boroughs were a chapter by themselves and as such are conceded one in this book, and a mere enumeration will suffice here of those under Government management or within the orbit of its influence. Saltash was an Admiralty borough, and will therefore be included with the other boroughs of that description. The two Looes and Camelford were managed for the Treasury, but were practically under the control of the managers. The six seats of Edward Eliot of Port Eliot, the five of Lord Falmouth, the four Cornish seats of Lord Edgcumbe (and one in Devonshire), the four of Humphrey Morice, all in varying degrees required the help and patronage of the

Treasury and were therefore usually at its disposal.¹ The position of these boroughs and their patrons may approximately be described as follows: In 1761, candidates for them were expected to obtain the *placet* of the Treasury. The patron or manager naturally had the first option if he wished to hold a seat himself or fill any with his own relatives, but if there was a disposable surplus for strangers, the Treasury expected to have its recommendation accepted. Still, its command over these Cornish borough-patrons was far from complete; witness John Buller, sen., and Edgcumbe going with Newcastle into opposition.

Lastly, in 1761 the Treasury nominated to Old Sarum and to one seat at Okehampton, which had been pawned with it by Thomas Pitt.

¹ Lord Falmouth, when asking Newcastle to have a friend presented to the living of Clements, explained that "the suburbs of my borough of Truro are in the parish", and asked the Duke to consider "how low in estimation it will set my brothers and self in the country if so trifling a favor . . . shou'd be refused us who are in His Majesty's service . . ." (February 21, 1756; Add. MSS. 32863, ff. 53-4).

Lord Edgcumbe wrote to Newcastle on July 6, 1766: "As your Grace knows how necessary it is for me to obey the commands of all my borough friends, I flatter myself you will easily pardon the trouble I now give you, which is to acquaint your Grace that the living of Landulph . . . is likely to become vacant . . ." (Add. MSS. 32863, f. 27).

When at the assizes at Bodmin, two men from Morice's so-called pocket boroughs were condemned to death for wrecking, he wrote Lord Shelburne, then Secretary of State, asking for a reprieve. This is a passage from the summary of his letter of August 31, 1767, as printed in the *Home Office Papers, 1765-69* (pp. 184-5): "Needs not explain to your Lordship the situation one is in with voters of boroughs just before a general election, and how apt they are to fancy one has not done one's utmost if one fails of success in a point that they have set their hearts upon". About Morice and his boroughs see also pp. 201-2 and 373-4.

Examples could be multiplied indefinitely; what they show is that even in the narrowest Cornish borough it was important for the patron to prove that he had influence with Administration.

Next, there were about twelve seats in Admiralty boroughs ; Saltash, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Rochester, and one seat at Queensborough were considered safe in 1761, though several of them were lost subsequently. Also at Sandwich the Admiralty recommended to one seat, but this always required much care and attention.¹ Hedon was an Admiralty borough in 1761, though it was neither at the beginning nor at the end of the century, and a special connexion seems to have existed between it and Lord Anson, First Lord of the Admiralty, about which I am not certain how much of it was official and how much private.²

At Queensborough the Admiralty nominated to one seat and the Ordnance to the other. Such distinctions between Government departments may seem peculiar to people who have never served in one ; those who have, will know that not even in the middle of a war do inter-departmental feuds disappear, nor can inter-departmental diplomacy be neglected—some examples of both will be found in the chapter on Harwich. A perfect summary of the position at Queensborough appears in a letter which Henry Pelham wrote to Newcastle on July 24, 1753 : “ . . . the Fleet and the Ordinance have great influence there, and therefore

¹ John Cleveland, Secretary to the Admiralty, wrote to Newcastle on February 26, 1761, urging him to declare his candidate for Sandwich or else there was the danger of “ a friend of your Grace’s not being chose there ” (Add. MSS. 32919, f. 293) ; and on October 3, 1776, John Robinson, when writing to George III about an office for William Hey, M.P. for Sandwich, wished for some delay to “ give time to arrange Sandwich which at present requires attention before the vacancy can be made with safety ” (Add. MSS. 37833, ff. 67-8).

² G. R. Park, *History of Hedon* (1895), gives no information on this point ; while the offer which in 1753 Lord Anson made to his father-in-law, Lord Hardwicke, of a seat at Hedon for his youngest son John (see Add. MSS. 35359, ff. 378-80), proves nothing, as the heads of Government departments at that time treated departmental boroughs as if they were their own property.

their dependants want to nominate"¹—which they did: Admiral Sir Piercy Brett represented Queensborough, 1754–74, and Sir Charles Frederick, Surveyor-General of the Ordnance, 1754–84. Of the twelve Admiralty seats in 1761, six were held by naval officers,² two by officials of the Admiralty, and one by a nephew of its First Lord. *For on boroughs controlled by a Government department its leading officers and officials had a first lien.*³

Thus in 1761, Administration as a whole can be said to have had 32 seats under its more or less immediate patronage—not all of them very safe—besides the three seats pawned by Thomas Pitt, and a first claim to the

¹ Add. MSS. 32732, f. 348. Interesting correspondence about Queensborough in 1774 is preserved in the letter-book of Lord Townshend, at that time Master-General of the Ordnance (R.O., W.O. 46/9, pp. 47-9).

² The number of naval officers who "sat on the Government interest" was given, on p. 41, as nine; but Newport (Isle of Wight), Penryn (where Rodney's seat was acquired from Lord Edgcumbe), and apparently also Dartmoor, were not Admiralty boroughs.

³ Under George III the more frequent changes of Ministers and the growth of a bureaucracy tended to strengthen in the Government boroughs the influence of the departments at the expense both of Ministers and of Members. When in October 1766 Newcastle applied to Sir Charles Saunders, then First Lord of the Admiralty, on behalf of a friend recommended by Sir Matthew Fetherstonehaugh, M.P. for Southampton, Saunders replied that he would gladly oblige him and Sir Matthew,

but your Grace perfectly knows that the interest of Government cannot be supported in the naval boroughs, if favours are bestowed upon them through the medium of any applications that do not come from the Corporations, or the principal people in them, to the person who presides at the Board of Admiralty; and that consequently how great soever my inclinations are to appoint Captain Hollwall to a guardship at Portsmouth, the giving him one in this mode may subject me to the imputation of not being so attentive as I ought to be to the interest of Government in that borough, as well as to many difficulties and inconveniences (Add. MSS. 32977, ff. 232-3).

marketable surplus of some 25 Cornish seats, and also of some in Devonshire, Dorset, Somerset, etc.

Private Patronage.—In 1792 the authors of the *Report on the State of Representation* wrote as follows :

The patronage your Committee have divided under two heads—*Nomination*, and *Influence* ; and attributed it to distinct persons, under the descriptions of *Peers* and *Commoners*.

With respect to this first division, your Committee desire to have it understood, that

By a nomination, they would describe that absolute authority in a borough which enables the patron to command the return. . . . These [boroughs], in general, are the private property of the patrons, or have the right of voting vested in a small corporate body, the majority of whom are his immediate dependents.

By influence, your Committee would describe that degree of weight acquired in a particular county, city or borough, which accustoms the electors on all vacancies to expect the recommendation of a candidate by the patron, and induces them, either from fear, from private interest, or from incapacity to oppose, because he is so recommended, to adopt him.¹

I propose to adopt the same division, except that I exclude from patronage such “influence” as was primarily based on tradition or on good-will, and was not of a binding character, *i.e.* which was conceded voluntarily, but could not be enforced. I therefore do not include any counties, for in none, probably not even in Westmorland or Rutland, could the most powerful man carry his candidates without the co-operation of other independent landowners. Nor do I include boroughs such as Chester, Durham, or Newcastle-on-Tyne, however faithful they were to the hereditary principle. For to this we have remained faithful even under the widest franchise and a secret ballot, without considering ourselves peculiarly unreformed or unredeemed. The two most revolutionary innovations made in Parliament in our own time were the coming in

¹ Pp. 30-31.

of Labour men and of women ; and as soon as the sons of three Labour leaders had come of age, they became candidates for Parliament, as the sons of peers in the eighteenth century, while the first three women who took their seats all inherited them from their husbands.¹ In saying that I eliminate seats held mainly through tradition or good-will, I do not mean to imply that there was no such influence in the places which I mention ; in at least four out of five constituencies something of both was required, but their absence could, in some degree or other, be replaced by compulsion, and it is the means of enforcing one's claim which primarily constitutes possession.

I give the result of my investigations, but further research will undoubtedly show that my list requires correction ; and as to the classification by " nomination " and " influence ", probably no two men, from the same data, will reach the same conclusions.

Borough Patronage of Peers

Names of Patrons.	Nomination.	Influence.
Duke of Newcastle (7)	Aldborough (2)	Lewes (1)
	Boroughbridge (2)	Newark (1)
		Retford (1)
Duke of Bedford (4)	Tavistock (2)	Okehampton (1)
		Bedford (1)

¹ One wonders indeed what eighteenth-century reformers would have thought of the peculiar new system of inheritance which now seems to be growing up among us, the inheritance which goes from the husband to the wife once chosen by him without the safeguard of periodical re-election.

Nor is the hereditary principle in elections limited to Great Britain or to Parliament. In Connecticut the family of Baldwin for over a century supplied a dynasty of Governors to the State, to the distinct advantage of the public. And on the death of the founder of the new enthusiastic sect of our time, the Salvation Army, no one was thought of as a possible successor to him on either side of the Atlantic except his son.

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Names of Patrons.	Nomination.	Influence.
Duke of Grafton (3)		Thetford (2) Bury St. Edmunds (1)
Duke of Devonshire (3)	Knaresborough (2)	Derby (1)
Duke of Dorset (2)	East Grinstead (2)	
Duke of Marlborough (2)	Woodstock (2)	
Duke of Rutland (2)		Newark (1) Grantham (1)
Duke of Bridgewater (2)	Brackley (2)	
Duke of Richmond (1)		Chichester (1)
Duke of Ancaster (1)		Boston (1)
Duke of Bolton (2) ¹		Winchester (1) Lymington (1)
Marquis of Rockingham (3)	Malton (2) Higham Ferrers (1)	
Earl of Abingdon (1)		Westbury (1)
Lord Anson (1)	Lichfield (1)	
Lord Archer (2) ²	Bramber (2)	
Lord Bathurst (1)		Cirencester (1)
Viscount Bolingbroke (1)		Wootton Bassett (1)
Lord Boston (1)		Bodmin (1)
Earl of Bristol (1)		Bury St. Edmunds (1)
Lord Bruce (4) ³	Great Bedwin (2) Marlborough (2)	
Earl of Buckinghamshire (2)	Beeralston (1)	St. Ives (1)
Earl of Cornwallis (2)	Eye (2)	
Lord Edgcumbe (5)		Lostwithiel (2) Penryn (1) Fowey (1) Plympton (1) Taunton (1) Stamford (1) Truro (2) Tregony (1) Penryn (1) St. Mawes (1)
Earl of Egremont (1)		
Earl of Exeter (1)		
Viscount Falmouth (5)		

¹ His hold on these boroughs was very uncertain, as was also the influence which he exercised at Christchurch and Whitchurch. On a rough average one can say that he influenced the election of two Members.

² His hold on the borough was uncertain.

³ His hold on Great Bedwin was not yet complete in 1761.

Names of Patrons.	Nomination.	Influence.
Lord Feversham (2)	Downton (2)	Droitwich (1)
Lord Foley (1)		Salisbury (1)
Viscount Folkestone (1)		Helston (2)
Earl of Godolphin (2)		Newcastle - under -
Earl of Gower (3)	Lichfield (1)	Lyne (2)
		Banbury (1)
Earl of Guilford (1)		
Earl of Hardwicke (1)	Reigate (1)	Shaftesbury (1)
Earl of Ilchester (1)		
Viscount Montague (2) ¹	Midhurst (2)	Melcombe Regis (1)
Lord Melcombe (2)		Bridgewater (1)
		Guilford (2)
Lord Onslow (2)		Ashburton (1)
Earl of Orford (4)	Castle Rising (1)	
	Callington (2) ²	Droitwich (1)
Earl of Oxford (1)		
Earl of Pembroke (2)	Wilton (2)	Andover (1)
Earl of Portsmouth (1)		Ludlow (2)
Earl of Powis (2)		Huntingdon (2)
Earl of Sandwich (2)		Shaftesbury (1)
Earl of Shaftesbury (1)		
Earl of Suffolk (1)	Castle Rising (1)	Buckingham (2)
Earl Temple (2)		Appleby (1)
Earl of Thanet (1)		Weohly (1)
Viscount Weymouth (2)		Tamworth (1)
		Chipping Wycombe
Lord Wycombe (Shelburne) (1)		(1)
<i>Scottish Peers</i>		
Earl of Bute (1)		Bossiney (1)
Viscount Irwin (2)	Horsham (2)	

¹ The family was Roman Catholic, and therefore could not exercise the patronage in its own favour.

² In 1761 Callington and Ashburton were really the property of his mother, the Dowager Lady Orford. She had inherited the influence from the Rolle and Tuckfield families.

Borough Patronage of Commoners

[The constituencies in this table are arranged by counties, with the Cinque Ports at the end, and Hampshire (co. Southampton) under "S"—as was always done in eighteenth-century lists.]

Names of Patrons.	Nomination.	Influence.
W. Drake (2)	Agmondesham (2)	Chipping Wycombe (1)
R. Waller (1)		
W. Clayton (1)	Liskeard (2) St. Germans (2) West Looe (2)	Great Marlow (1)
Lord Verney (2)		Wendover (2)
G. Hunt (1)		Bodmin (1)
J. Rashleigh (1)		Fowey (1)
H. Morice (4)		Launceston (2)
		Newport (2)
R. Nugent (1)		St. Mawes (1)
C. Phillips (2)		Camelford (2)
E. Eliot (6)		Grampound (2)
John Buller (4)		East Looe (2)
W. Trevanion (1)	Appleby (1) Beeralston (1) Old Sarum (2)	Tregoney (1)
Sir J. Lowther (3)		Cockermouth (2)
Sir F. H. Drake (1)		
T. Pitt (3)		Okehampton (1)
G. Treby (1)		Plympton (1)
N. Ryder (1)		Tiverton (1)
H. Bankes (1)		
J. Bond (1)		
T. Fane (2)		
J. Pitt (1)		Wareham (1)
T. E. Drax (1)	Corfe Castle (1) Corfe Castle (1) Lyne Regis (2)	Wareham (1)
J. Tucker (1)		Weymouth and Melcombe Regis (1)
T. Lister (1)		
A. Curzon (1)		
P. Legh (2)		
Sir J. Cust (1)		Grantham (1)
W. Whitmore (1)		Bridgnorth (1)
B. Forester (2)		Wenlock (2)
T. Lockyer (2)		Ilchester (2)
T. Medlycott (1)	Clitheroe (1) Clitheroe (1) Newton, Lancs. (2)	Milborne Port (1)
C. Tudway (1)		Wells (1)

Names of Patrons.	Nomination.	Influence.
E. Hooper (2)		Christchurch (2)
H. Burrard (1)		Lymington (1)
Sir J. Barrington, Bart. (1)	Newton, Hants. (1)	
J. Jolliffe (2)		Petersfield (2)
T. Townshend (1)		Whitechurch (1)
T. Fonnereau (3)		Aldeburgh (2)
		Sudbury (1)
		Dunwich (2)
Sir J. Downing (2)		
Sir K. Clayton, Bart (2)	Bletchingley (2)	
Sir J. Colebrooke, Bart. (1)	Gatton (1)	
T. M. Molyneux (1)	Haslemere (1)	
P. C. Webb (1)	Haslemere (1)	
C. Cocks (1)	Reigate (1)	
F. Honywood (1)		Steyning (1)
T. Duckett (2)		Calne (2)
P. A'Court Ashe (2)	Heytesbury (2)	
G. A. Selwyn (2)	Ludgershall (2)	
Sir J. Rushout (1)		Evesham (1)
E. Lascelles (2)	Northallerton (2)	
Lord Galway (1)	Pontefract (1)	
T. Yorke (2)	Richmond (2)	
W. Aislabie (2)	Ripon (2)	
T. Frankland (2)	Thirsk (2)	
E. Dering (2)		N. Romney (2)

There were in April 1761, 165 English peers : 21 dukes,¹ 1 marquis, 78 earls, 11 viscounts, and 55 barons ; besides, 2 English dukedoms, 3 earldoms, 1 viscounty, and 8 baronies—together, 14 peerages—were held by Scottish or Irish peers.

Of the 21 English dukes, 11 had, under both headings of “nomination” and “influence”, about 29 seats at their disposal. The remaining 10 English dukes had no Parliamentary boroughs at their disposal: these were the Dukes of Norfolk, Somerset, Cleveland, Beaufort, St. Albans, Leeds, Kingston, Portland, Manchester, and Chandos. This does not mean that they had no borough influence, but it did not reach the level of “patronage”;

¹ This figure does not include the Dukes of the Blood Royal.

thus, *e.g.*, the Duke of Somerset had some at Totnes; the Duke of Kingston at Nottingham; the Duke of Portland in 1768 carried Carlisle against Sir James Lowther; the Duke of Chandos had an influence in various places in Hampshire, etc. Of the remaining 144 English peers, 37 returned 68 Members of Parliament; and to these have to be added the Earl of Shelburne (Lord Wycombe in England) and two Scottish peers, Lord Bute and Lord Irwin, who together nominated to four seats.

This makes a total of 51 peers nominating Members or influencing their elections for 101 seats.

The division between peers and commoners, to which the eighteenth century attached an importance even then no longer justified by the social and economic structure of the country, naturally does not strike us as something fundamental, especially if we free ourselves from the legend of the close Whig "oligarchy". Still, I have kept to it, for the division itself helps to destroy that legend. Here are 51 peers with an average of only two seats each—the whales prove rather common fry; and if we analyse in detail the list of large borough owners there is only the lifelong election agent, the Duke of Newcastle, with seven seats, and two professional dealers in boroughs, who owed their very peerages to their electoral interests, Lords Falmouth and Edgcumbe, with five seats each.

Of commoners I obtain a total of 55 borough patrons determining or influencing the elections for 91 seats.¹ Five only among them had influence in more than one borough: three Cornish "professionals" (Eliot, Morice, and Buller)

¹ I have omitted from this list Lord Holmes (an Irish peer) with his five seats in the Isle of Wight, as his influence in them depended so much on Government support that he has to be treated as a manager rather than as a patron; I have, however, included in it John Buller, though he stands very near the border line, because on the whole I think his influence at East and West Looe was stronger than that of the Government.

and one ex-professional (Thomas Pitt), and Sir James Lowther, the Leviathan of Cumberland and Westmorland. 46 of the 91 seats controlled by commoners were filled in 1761 by the patrons and 13 by their close relatives; *i.e.* almost two-thirds were kept for the families, besides eight for which friends or dependants were returned; only 25 were sold (twelve of them in Cornwall). The list of patrons includes the names of some of the best county families, a good many men who never solicited any favours under George II (Lister, Curzon, Legh, John Pitt, Tudway, Drax, Hunt, Rashleigh, Deering, etc.); and some who were to be among the most strenuous champions of the Opposition under George III (Lord Verney, T. Townshend, the Claytons, the A'Courts, etc.). These men sitting "in their own right" in the House of Commons are certainly not representative in the meaning we now attach to the word, but are as representative as any juryman; and in the absence of an organised party system, the freest and most independent House of Commons would not essentially differ from a jury.

Taking peers and commoners together, I obtain for England a total of 106 borough patrons determining or influencing the election for 192 seats; adding 32 seats more or less under the immediate management of the Government, I obtain a total of 234 borough seats under patronage. The number is high—almost half of the representation of England—and could be raised still further by adding seats which were not free, but merely disputed between patrons. What was the influence which this state of the franchise exercised on divisions in the House?

DIVISIONS ANALYSED

Let us first examine the vote on General Warrants taken at 4.15 A.M. on February 18, 1764 (but usually referred to as the division of February 17). From the very beginning it had been realised that the session would

be critical for the Government, and every effort had been made to secure a large attendance; "I never knew a stricter muster and no furloughs allowed," wrote Lord Chesterfield on October 17, 1763, to Philip Stanhope, who held a minor diplomatic appointment in Germany and was summoned to London to attend Parliament.¹ And when on February 15, 1764, the Government majority had shrunk to ten (207 *v.* 197), frantic activity was displayed on either side to bring up every available Member for the crucial division.² George Onslow, M.P. for Surrey, one of Newcastle's reporters from the House of Commons, wrote at the outset of the debate on Friday afternoon, February 17: "Everybody almost is down of both sides";³ and this was Horace Walpole's description of the scene: ". . . one would have thought that they had sent a search warrant for Members of Parliament into every hospital. Votes were brought down in flannels and blankets till the floor of the House looked like the pool of Bethesda."⁴

On February 18 Newcastle wrote: "Yesterday, upon the great question of the warrant, there were 218 to 232";⁵ and similarly in a letter on February 21.⁶ The same figures were given by Horace Walpole to Lord Hertford on February 19, but George Grenville, in his diary, puts the minority at 220,⁷ and this is also the figure given by Charles Townshend in his *Defence of the Minority*; whilst *The History of the Late Minority*, having put the Opposition vote at 218, follows up the statement with a list containing

¹ See also Chesterfield's letter to him of October 19, 1764.

² See, e.g., on the Government side the letter from Edward Kynaston, M.P., to Charles Jenkinson, M.P., Secretary to the Treasury (Add. MSS. 38202, f. 97); and on the Opposition side numerous letters from the Duke of Newcastle to various Members in Add. MSS. 32956.

³ Add. MSS. 32956, f. 19.

⁴ To Lord Hertford, February 19, 1764.

⁵ Add. MSS. 32956, f. 37.

⁶ *Ibid.* f. 59.

⁷ *Grenville Papers*, vol. ii. p. 492.

221 names. The *Journals of the House of Commons* put the figures at 232 v. 218, without the tellers;¹ their inclusion or omission explains the most common difference between the various accounts. In the Newcastle Papers there are three lists of "names of those who voted against putting off the question about the illegality of the warrant", the first drawn up on February 22, the second on the 27th, and the third on March 2;² they show certain doubts and changes, but each contains 222 names. Both the *History of the Late Minority* and the lists in the Newcastle Papers add names of "absent friends", and these naturally differ even more than the lists of those who actually voted. Lastly, in the Liverpool Papers, containing calculations made on the Government side, there is a "List of Friends Absent February 17, 1764" (46 names),³ and a "List of Persons who voted with the Minority on the 17th February, 1764, who are friends or nearly so" (49 names).⁴ I cannot enter here into the differences between the various lists, but must state the basis of my calculations: I put the figures at 234 and 220, and take the names as published in *The History of the Late Minority*, but transfer W. Plumer to the list of absent Members. I also classify as absent T. Duncombe, J. Hayes, R. S. Lloyd, and T. Willoughby, though in some papers they are stated to have voted with the Opposition.

Thus, even after the most frantic attempts to secure attendance, the House was 103 short of its full number. I know of no list of the majority. But from the lists mentioned above of absent friends on either side (some are counted as "friends" by both) 70 names can be collected, to which I add Duncombe, Hayes, Lloyd, and Willoughby, one vacant seat, and six Members who can be proved to

¹ Vol. xxix. p. 846.

² Add. MSS. 32956, ff. 68-71, 118-21, and 186-9; see also lists of "Original Tories who voted with us," *ibid.* ff. 116 and 18.

³ Add. MSS. 38337, f. 192.

⁴ *Ibid.* f. 193.

have been absent¹ though they are not mentioned in any of these lists which were drawn up for pragmatic and not for statistical purposes or for historical record. Thus the number of Members unaccounted for is only 22, and they need not concern us any further; but it should be remembered that the figures are only approximately correct. I divide the English constituencies into four types: the counties; the larger boroughs,² (with over 1000 and with 500-1000 voters); the smaller boroughs which include all the remaining English constituencies, barring the two Universities.

	Voted with the Minority.		Known to have been Absent.	
80 Members for counties . . .	37	46%	15	19%
90 Members for the larger boroughs ³ . . .	45	50%	14 ⁴	15.5%
315 Members for the smaller boroughs . . .	126	40%	46	14.5%
4 Members for the Universities	1	25%	1	25%
<hr/> 489	<hr/> 209	<hr/> 43%	<hr/> 76	<hr/> 15.5%

Thus of the total of 489 English Members, 209 voted

¹ E. Wortley Montagu was travelling in the East and apparently had never taken his seat in the Parliament of 1761; John Craufurd was with his regiment in Minorca, where he died the same year; four diplomats holding important or distant posts could not be summoned home to attend Parliament—Henry Grenville at Constantinople, George Pitt at Turin, Andrew Mitchell at Berlin, and Joseph Yorke at The Hague (there is a letter from him to his brother, Lord Royston, dated The Hague, February 17, 1764; Add. MSS. 35367, f. 26). The seat vacant at the time was County Perth, its Member, John Murray, having succeeded to the Dukedom of Atholl.

² For statistical purposes these larger divisions have to be adopted or otherwise the results are too easily affected by accidents; the constituencies with about 500 voters I join to the smaller bodies.

³ The word "borough" stands here for its electorate; a populous borough may appear among the "smaller boroughs" if it had a narrow franchise. Thus, *e.g.*, Shrewsbury is included among the "smaller", whilst Bridgnorth is counted among the "larger" boroughs.

⁴ Among these I include the Speaker, who did not vote.

of Labour men and of women; and as soon as the sons of three Labour leaders had come of age, they became candidates for Parliament, as the sons of peers in the eighteenth century, while the first three women who took their seats all inherited them from their husbands.¹ In saying that I eliminate seats held mainly through tradition or good-will, I do not mean to imply that there was no such influence in the places which I mention; in at least four out of five constituencies something of both was required, but their absence could, in some degree or other, be replaced by compulsion, and it is the means of enforcing one's claim which primarily constitutes possession.

I give the result of my investigations, but further research will undoubtedly show that my list requires correction; and as to the classification by "nomination" and "influence", probably no two men, from the same data, will reach the same conclusions.

Borough Patronage of Peers

Names of Patrons.	Nomination.	Influence.
Duke of Newcastle (7)	Aldborough (2)	Lewes (1)
	Boroughbridge (2)	Newark (1)
		Retford (1)
Duke of Bedford (4)	Tavistock (2)	Okehampton (1)
		Bedford (1)

¹ One wonders indeed what eighteenth-century reformers would have thought of the peculiar new system of inheritance which now seems to be growing up among us, the inheritance which goes from the husband to the wife once chosen by him without the safeguard of periodical re-election.

Nor is the hereditary principle in elections limited to Great Britain or to Parliament. In Connecticut the family of Baldwin for over a century supplied a dynasty of Governors to the State, to the distinct advantage of the public. And on the death of the founder of the new enthusiastic sect of our time, the Salvation Army, no one was thought of as a possible successor to him on either side of the Atlantic except his son.

was not so much the condition of the English franchise which defeated the Opposition on this occasion as the racial conflict between the two kingdoms.

Let us next examine the vote on the Repeal of the Stamp Act, usually referred to as of February 21, 1766, but in reality taken on Saturday, February 22, at 2 A.M. The figures usually given are 275 for and 167 against the Repeal;¹ but the *List of the Minority in the House of Commons who voted against the Bill to repeal the American Stamp Act*² (published in Paris in 1766) contains 168 names. This, discounting the Speaker, leaves 114 absent. Arranging this new minority in the same divisions as before, we obtain the following results:

	Voted against the Repeal.		Assuming a proportionate distribution of those Absent, there would have been Absent.
80 Members for counties .	29	36%	16
90 Members for the larger boroughs	19	21%	18
315 Members for the smaller boroughs	85	27%	65
4 Members for Universities	1	25%	1
<hr/>			
489 Members for English Constituencies . .	134	27%	100
24 Welsh Members . .	7	29%	5
45 Scottish Members .	27	60%	9

Thus in England the opposition against concessions to the colonies was strongest among the representatives of the counties; it reflected the authoritarian attitude of the inde-

¹ See, e.g., reports from Rockingham and Conway to the King in *The Correspondence of King George III*, edited by Sir John Fortescue, vol. i. pp. 274-5; James West's report to Newcastle, Add. MSS. 32974, f. 49; letter from R. Palmer, chaplain to the Speaker, to Dr. Richard Cust, *Records of the Cust Family*, vol. iii. (edited by Sir Lionel Cust), p. 96; etc.

² The date of the division is not given, but it clearly refers to that of February 21-22.

pendent country gentlemen. Seeing that their attendance in Parliament was as a rule weaker than that of the urban representatives and the placemen, and that therefore the number of absentees is likely to have exceeded the 16 given them on a proportionate division of the total of 114 absent, it is uncertain whether among them there was a majority for the Repeal, even after the Declaratory Act had been added with a view to gaining their acquiescence. On the other hand, most marked of all was the majority in favour of the Repeal among the representatives of the larger urban constituencies, obviously under pressure from the trading interests. The representatives of the smaller boroughs stood half-way between those of the counties and of the big city electorates, the proportion of those who voted against the Repeal being about the same as in the rest of England taken together. The various conflicting influences on this occasion seem to have neutralised each other, and made the representatives of the smaller boroughs into a mere padding to the more independent part of the House. The Scotch once more voted to an overwhelming degree on what would now be described as the "reactionary" side, probably less from interest or authoritarian convictions than as a consequence of the continuous baiting which they had suffered during the preceding years from the "sons of liberty".¹

¹ There is in the Newcastle Papers another list of the minority which voted against the Repeal of the Stamp Act on February 21-22, 1766 (Add. MSS. 32974, f. 169); it was sent to Newcastle by Sir William Meredith, M.P. for Liverpool. This, too, contains 168 names, but only 153 tally with those given in the printed list. Still, judging by certain other evidence (*e.g.* West's note to Newcastle written on February 22, at 2.15 A.M.; Add. MSS. 32974, f. 49), neither is altogether correct. On the whole I prefer, for reasons into which I cannot enter here, to take the printed list for basis of my calculations. I add, however, the corresponding figures obtained from an analysis of Meredith's list—there voted in the minority: Members for English counties, 30; for larger boroughs, 17; for smaller boroughs, 87; for Universities, 1; Welsh Members, 8; Scottish Members, 25. Thus for

er a third example I take the division over Wilkes, on January 3, 1769, when 219 are stated to have voted for expulsion and 137 against. At the close of the year *Gentleman's Magazine* published a list of Members of the House of Commons, marking against each how he had voted on that occasion ;¹ the list is not, however, altogether accurate—in some cases, where a change had supervened since the division, it gives both Members, it omits other Members altogether, it wrongly marks many as not yet elected on that day, etc. These mistakes and omissions account for the best part of the 16 in the last column. Mistakes in the marking of votes I have not attempted to check, and it will be noticed that the number of those who voted against Wilkes's expulsion exceeds here by three that usually accepted—all these figures must be taken as no more than approximately correct.

	For Wilkes's Expulsion.	Against.	Absent.	Vacant or not accounted for.
80 Members for counties	22	23	32 ²	3
90 Members for the larger boroughs .	29	28	32	1 ³
315 Members for the smaller boroughs	124	84	100	7
4 Members for the Universities .	1	1	2	..
489 Members for English constituencies .	176	136	166	11
24 Welsh Members .	10	4	9	1
45 Scottish Members .	32	..	9	4
	218	140	184	16

our purpose there is very little difference between the two lists; that of Meredith reduces the number of Scotchmen voting against the Repeal by two, but otherwise emphasises even more strongly the conclusions given above.

¹ The date of the division is not named, but I can see no other than that of February 3 which the facts would suit at all.

² This includes Wilkes himself.

³ This is the Speaker, Sir John Cust, M.P. for Grantham.

Taking the 174 Members returned by the most representative English constituencies—the counties, the ¹⁸ boroughs, and the Universities—we find that 52 voted ^e for the expulsion of Wilkes and 52 against, whilst 66 w³ ² were absent and four are not accounted for.¹ Opinion among the independent members was divided between adherence to certain constitutional principles and dislike of the very dubious character over whom the battle was fought. In these circumstances the representatives of the smaller boroughs, among whom the Government influence was strongest, gave the casting vote for expulsion, and it seems but right that there should have been a make-weight in favour of Government on such an occasion. The opponents of Wilkes were, moreover, supported by an absolutely solid Scottish contingent, again voting on racial lines.

What are, then, the general conclusions we can draw from these three divisions? They do no more than confirm what we could have expected from the preceding survey of the personnel of the House and of the electoral structure of the country. The knights of the shires, independent of the Government in their constituencies and not, as a rule, soliciting personal favours, and the representatives of the larger urban constituencies, similarly not depending on the Government for their seats, responded more freely to public opinion than the Members for rotten boroughs and close corporations. Still, the difference was “on the margin”; the bulk of Members in both categories consisted of men similar in type and character, and even the Members for the worst among the rotten boroughs did not remain impervious to the currents of popular feeling; many of these were, in fact, more independent of the

¹ T. Whichcote, M.P. for Lincs., is telescoped in the list with James Whitshed, M.P. for Cirencester; Sir J. Molesworth, M.P. for Cornwall, is wrongly marked as not yet a Member; one seat for Kent was vacant; and the Speaker, Sir J. Cust, M.P. for Grantham, is the fourth.

ernment, representing their own pocket boroughs or
se of patrons belonging to the Opposition, than they
uld have been as representatives of electorates requiring
overnment assistance in their corporate concerns. The
otten boroughs supplied the Government with a make-
weight of about 5-10 per cent in the House in favour of
authority, but also of statesmanship, when such was
present in the Ministers ; this make-weight being very
much less than party discipline supplies at present. As
for American problems, had the number of the knights
of the shire been doubled at the expense of the rotten
boroughs, it seems doubtful whether the result would have
been much more favourable to sound Imperial statesman-
ship. Anyhow, in none of the three crucial divisions
analysed above does the result seem to have been funda-
mentally vitiated by the rotten boroughs ; the Scottish
issue was of greater weight, and while it strengthened the
Whig opposition in the south, it supplied a counter-weight
to the other side in the House in the form of a more or
less solid contingent from " North Britain ".

Pitt's remarks during the debate on the Repeal of the
Stamp Act about " the rotten part of the Constitution "
are often quoted, but they were made in reply to argu-
ments about virtual representation, and not in reference
to divisions in the House. He himself represented, from
1735 till 1747, the seven famous burgages of Old Sarum,
1747-54 an electorate of less than 75 at Seaford (un-
constitutionally influenced by the Duke of Newcastle),
1754-56 Newcastle's pocket borough of Aldborough with
less than 50 electors, and 1756-66 the 32 members of the
Corporation of Bath. At no time during his thirty-one
years in Parliament did he, the idol of the whole Empire,
represent as many as 100 electors, or experience what it
meant to have dealings, *e.g.*, with the 5000 " independent "
voters of Bristol.

III

THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1761

III

THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1761

ON March 3, 1761, Horace Walpole wrote to Horace Mann :

. . . Parliament . . . now engrosses all conversation and all purses ; for the expense is incredible. West Indians, conquerors, nabobs, and admirals, attack every borough ; there are no fewer than nine candidates at Andover. The change in a Parliament used to be computed at between sixty and seventy ; now it is believed there will be an hundred and fifty new members . . . venality is grosser than ever ! The borough of Sudbury has gone so far as to advertise for a chapman ! We have been as victorious as the Romans and are as corrupt. . . .¹

These were casual remarks and an epigram, not an affidavit to serve as evidence in the court of history. But so much history is fancy weaving on the warp of a few common " texts " that Horace Walpole's casual remarks and illustrations have gone the round of the textbooks (rightly so called) on English history.²

¹ *Letters of Horace Walpole* (ed. by Mrs. Paget Toynbee), v. 29.

² See, e.g., Mr. W. Hunt's beautifully embroidered version in his *History of England, 1760-1801*, p. 19 : " . . . in this election the Crown itself used its own means of corrupt influence. Private men followed its example. A new class of candidates appeared, men without party connexion or local interest, who had lately become rich, West India merchants, ' nabobs ' gorged with the spoils of the East, shareholders of the East India Company, admirals and others who had reaped a splendid harvest from the destruction of the commerce and shipping of France. The competition for seats was extraordinary ; at Andover there were nine candidates. Constituencies which had

On closer examination only a single one of the more general statements quoted above is found correct—that which appears as a mere “belief”. At the general election of 1761, 128 men entered the House of Commons who had never sat in it before, and another twenty-two who had sat previously, but not at the dissolution; the estimate of “an hundred and fifty new members” (in a total of 558) was thus singularly accurate.¹ But the further statement on which its value largely depends, that “the change in a Parliament used to be computed at between sixty and seventy”, is a gross inaccuracy. The number of new Members returned at the general elections of 1747 and 1754 was about the same as in 1761.²

Nor is there evidence to show that election contests were more numerous than usual. The number of constituencies which in 1761 actually went to the poll was 48³ out of a total of 315; it was, in fact, smaller than it had been at the general election of 1754, which itself was comparatively quiet, with no opposition on a national scale and no Prince of Wales to back it (as in 1741 and 1747). The number of candidates who “stood the poll” was, however, invariably only a fraction of those who tentatively “offered themselves” (e.g. in 1761, Andover with its “nine candidates” finished by returning the sitting Members

long obeyed the orders of great landlords were no longer to be reckoned upon. . . . Bribery was carried to a preposterous height. . . . The borough of Sudbury went so far as to advertise itself for sale.”

¹ To these might be added five elected in December 1761, to replace men who had been returned simultaneously for two constituencies; none of these five had sat in Parliament before.

² I have not analysed the personnel of those Parliaments, but in the lists published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* the number of new Members is 162 in 1747 and 161 in 1754, in 1761—158. The figure for 1761 is not far out, and there is no reason to assume that the lists of the other two Parliaments contain any greater element of error.

³ This figure covers the whole of Great Britain, whereas the figure of 41, given on p. 104, refers to England only.

unopposed). In the majority of constituencies the electorates were small, the voting was everywhere open, the keeping of election promises—on whatever basis and by whatever means they were obtained—was considered a matter of honour ; the canvass, therefore, supplied more or less valid indications of chances, and the man who saw that he had none would, more often than not, “ drop his pretensions and decline the poll ”.

Peculiar circumstances at first kept down electioneering activities in 1760, and subsequently compressed them into a short time, producing perhaps thereby an impression of greater intensity. Security of tenure was an important consideration, when a seat in Parliament was a lease paid for in advance on something like “ a house . . . which I had taken for seven years ”.¹ The danger of an appeal to the country was negligible ; between 1715 and the dissolution of 1784 the duration of three Parliaments only (in 1747, 1774, and 1780) was slightly shortened by the Government. The main risk lay in the death of the Sovereign, which until 1867 had, within six months, to be followed by a dissolution of Parliament. In 1760 George II had reached his seventy-seventh year, and was not expected to last another Parliament. Hence at first many people were unwilling to become candidates. Lord Kinnoull, when advising the Duke of Newcastle to aim at a quiet general election, with the least possible disturbance of the *status possidendi*, remarked that the age of the King “ may probably contribute to the more easy execution of this plan ”. “ Nobody, except some extraordinary genius, or where the future settlement of an interest is materially concerned, will spend much upon such a tenure.”² Newcastle agreed with Kinnoull : “ . . . I feel every day that private persons will not risk much money to get into this next Parliament, in its present

¹ Lord Bath to the Duke of Newcastle, November 21, 1759. Add. MSS. 32899, f. 19.

² July 10, 1760 ; Add. MSS. 32908, ff. 160-77.

circumstance.”¹ Similarly John Calcraft reported on August 14, 1760, to Colonel Harvey, then on active service in Germany: “Elections surprizingly quiet.”² By the beginning of October, Newcastle wrote that “people begin to stir a little more of late than they had done, about elections.”³ But it was only after the death of George II (October 25, 1760) that a more intense interest awoke in the forthcoming general election. “It is imagined there will now be a great contest to get into Parliament”, wrote Edward Hooper to James Harris on November 8, 1760.⁴ And the Duke of Newcastle to Lord Granby, on November 25: “There is not much opposition yet declared; tho’ some, which would not have been, had it not been for our late great, and ever to be lamented loss.”⁵

With the vastly improved prospects of tenure, did corruption really reach an unusual height? There is some confusion of ideas about electoral corruption: no employer of labour, when made to pay higher wages, will call it an increase in output, but corruption is frequently measured by expense; as if the “purity” of an election was affected by whether the freemen of some borough received £10 or £20 per head, or by the size of the lump sum paid for a seat to its patron.

¹ The Duke of Newcastle to Lord Hardwicke, August 16, 1760; Add. MSS. 32910, ff. 120-35.

² Add. MSS. 17495, f. 103. Colonel Harvey was from a well-known Essex Parliamentary family, a brother of William Harvey, M.P. for the county, and Eliab Harvey, K.C., M.P. for Dunwich.

³ The Duke of Newcastle to Lord Powis, October 10, 1760. Add. MSS. 32912, f. 295. It is not certain whether even this statement was not largely an expression of the Duke’s dominant sentiment, which was fear.

⁴ *Letters of the First Earl of Malmesbury* (1870), vol. i. p. 83. Edward Hooper, from an old Dorset family, sat for Christchurch, 1734-47, when he was appointed Commissioner of Customs; it was through his interest that his cousin, James Harris, the father of the 1st Earl of Malmesbury, was returned for Christchurch.

⁵ Add. MSS. 32915, f. 59.

But what did constitute corruption in eighteenth-century England? For the elector the vote, for the borough its representation, for the Member his seat in Parliament, were valuable assets from which advantages were expected. The Member had to show due "regard" to his constituents, individually and in the aggregate, to accord to them or obtain for them "benefits", and in short be "indefatigable in serving his friends"; just as he himself expected proper "consideration" and "marks of favour" from His Majesty and the Administration, if he was counted among their "friends"—"protection is due to attachment, and . . . sentiments of friendship to be real and lasting must be reciprocal".¹ By the middle of the eighteenth century these things had come to be considered perfectly legitimate and honourable; and it was merely the manner and the circumstances in which they were received, and the person from whom they were solicited and accepted, that distinguished finding one's legitimate account from taking a bribe. A Member could expect to be provided for by the leader of his party or group, and his not being offered any favours would mark him as an insignificant and neglected person; but an interested change of sides at a critical moment was corrupt. In the same way, every constituency up and down the country, especially every borough constituency, had to be nursed, but such loving care allowed of infinite variations.

There were, among the boroughs, faithful wives—still, even they had not been guided by passion in the choice of their husbands, but had paid proper regard to the candidate's family, rank, and financial circumstances; "You would be flinging yourself away", explained a fine, high-minded man to his daughter in 1769, "had your husband neither birth nor fortune. . . . You would blush

¹ Hans Stanley to the Duke of Newcastle, June 26, 1759; Add. MSS. 32892, ff. 245-6.

for ever to be tied to a low man, and you would starve with a gentleman who could not maintain you." Then there were kept mistresses, rather expensive, relatively faithful, but not wedded to their elects, and with the money-nexus playing a greater part in their relations than attachment. Lastly, there were prostitutes, "ready to receive any adventurer whatever who will bring them money"; and content to have him introduced by the name of "General Gold".¹ Numerical impressions are always unreliable; but what can be their value, where distinctions are of such a delicate nature? A slow, downward movement was almost unavoidable when financial benefits were an essential part of the electoral system, virtue being more easily lost than recovered. Still, though rare, cases are known of constituencies which to some extent retrieved their character, *e.g.* Bishop's Castle, in Shropshire, after having for a long time been notorious as an "open", venal borough, from 1768 to 1820 led a much better regulated existence under Clive patronage.

A close examination does not reveal any widespread or rapid downward movement in 1761, and the contemporary outcry about the incredible growth of corruption is merely an inaccurately worded complaint at the "Immense Expense" of elections (words fraught with such painful meaning as to be accorded capitals even by men who otherwise were sparing of them). But even those complaints, or rather such clamour, cannot be accepted without the evidence of figures, as sentiment discounts past payments, no less than future, and, like water at the freezing-point, expense weighs heaviest at the moment of liquefaction.

The so-called "price of seats" was in reality a payment regulated by certain conventions of the market rather than by the cost of production, and there was, as a rule, a wide difference between the expense and trouble involved in the control of a constituency and the sum paid for a "ready-

¹ See the Hindon election of 1774.

made " seat at an election. No average whatsoever can be formulated with regard to the expense of establishing and maintaining an " interest " in a constituency ; the task was too complex, it varied from place to place, and depended as much on the nature and character of the man who undertook it as on the constituency itself. It was a process which extended over years, and even over generations, and involved appeals to tradition, sentiment, interest, fear, etc. Nor could there possibly be an average price when so often a *pretium affectionis* was paid, e.g. in contested elections where two families fought out rival claims to the representation and control of a constituency long disputed between them—especially as in such contests more or less permanent possession and not a septennial lease was frequently in question. No one ever tried to establish an electoral influence in Parliamentary boroughs with a view to making money, and whereas scores of big fortunes were sunk into Parliamentary boroughs,¹ not a single one, even of moderate size, is known to have been acquired through them. The price which a candidate paid at an election for a " ready-made " seat to the patron or manager of a borough was usually but a part of the cost involved in its

¹ A good illustration of the economics of pocket boroughs is found in a paper wherein Humphrey Morice, in April 1780, explained to Lord North "the reason which induced him to part with his estate and his interest in two boroughs" (Launceston and Newport)—he had sold them to the Duke of Northumberland:

An estate of twelve hundred pounds p. ann. in a maner given up to the supporting the boroughs and three thousand pds. besides annually expended for that purpose and keeping up the house &c.

The trouble of it not to say anything of the expence is more than Mr. M. can bear with a constitution much impaired by the gout. . . .

He lost a member last year after all the trouble and expence he had been at and notwithstanding the established interest he seems to have he may be worse off next time. . . .

(See *Correspondence of King George III*, ed. by Sir John Fortescue, vol. v. p. 55).

control, and was seldom expected to reimburse all the expense which the patron was put to, year after year, in preserving his "interest" in the constituency. Most of the borough seats sold by patrons or local managers went to candidates put up by the Government or approved by it, and such compliance with its wishes was paid for in titles, ribbons, Court honours, office, promotions, etc.; all adjusted to the rank, standing, and requirements of the person concerned; and also, on a humbler level, by support for the patron's electoral interest—office appointments, jobs, livings, promotion, etc., had to be provided for influential men in the constituency at the recommendation of the patron.

It is these imponderables of Government favour which explain why the prices usually quoted for seats were in appearance so low. The net expenditure of the Government at the general election of 1754 was not more than £30,000,¹ in 1774 about £50,000, and in 1780 approximately the same;² and in 1761 no money was spent by the Treasury on the general election. But, to give an example taken at random, Sir George Yonge, fifth and last Baronet, "is reported to have said in his old age that he had inherited £80,000 from his father, his wife brought him a like amount, the Government paid him £80,000, but Honiton swallowed it all".³ Even though this statement must not be treated as statistical evidence, it gives some idea of the difference between the cost of nursing one expensive constituency and the apparent total expenditure of the Government at a general election. In fact, if £50,000 really represented the whole, or even the larger part, of the Government expendi-

¹ See pp. 248-51.

² See W. H. Donne, *Correspondence of King George III with Lord North*, vol. ii. pp. 424-6.

³ W. G. Willis Watson, in *Notes and Queries*, eleventh series, vol. i. p. 191. Sir George Yonge represented Honiton, 1754-61 and 1763-96; he and his ancestors sat for it 101 years in twenty-nine Parliaments.

ture, any number of subjects of the King could have afforded seriously to compete with him in election activities. For £50,000 was no longer a vast sum in the eighteenth century. Lady Bute, in 1761, is said to have inherited about £800,000 from her father, E. Wortley Montagu; Lord Bath, at his death in 1764, was reputed to have left £1,200,000; the fortune of Sir Samuel Fludyer, M.P., a London merchant, was valued in 1767 at about £900,000; William Beckford, M.P., Lord Mayor of London, wrote in a letter to Lady Cathcart, in 1770, that his son's fortune will be £40,000 a year, besides many thousands in cash;¹ etc.

It was because the price of pocket boroughs was in a way conventional that one can talk at all about an average; this, in 1761, was £2000 for a seat. On February 3, 1761, the Duke of Newcastle wrote to Lord Hardwicke that he had found a place for Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Hardwicke's rich and shy son-in-law. "But the expence will be very great—the same as the Duke of Newcastle has mention'd upon other occasions, vizt. 2000£, and the Duke of Newcastle is sorry to observe that there are few, or no places where it will be less."² Lord Hardwicke (who was accustomed to have his sons returned by borough-patrons free of charge) replied the same day that Sir Gilbert "thinks, as every body must, the sum exorbitant", but "is ready to give it, provided he may be excused from going down to Shaftesbury, and any personal attendance".³ At Penryn the two Clive candidates, who stood on the Basset interest, deposited £2000 each, which Hardwicke, in a letter to Bute, described as "the current price of the times".⁴ John Calcraft reported on December 2, 1760, to Colonel Edward Harvey that everybody was striving to get into Parliament and that it must cost Harvey £2000, if an opportunity was found;⁵ similarly to Jenison Shafto, when negotiating a seat for

¹ *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Appendix to Second Report, *Cathcart MSS.*, p. 25. ² *Add. MSS.* 35420, f. 177. ³ *Add. MSS.* 32918, f. 228.

⁴ See p. 387.

⁵ *Add. MSS.* 17495, f. 179.

him through Lord Bateman at Leominster: "You have a sure seat in Parliament and as things go it will be a cheap one for 2000 guineas is offer'd everywhere."¹ The "cheapness" in this case seems to have been in pounds being charged (as they usually were), and not guineas; for from Lord Bute's letter to the Duke of Newcastle, March 18, 1761, it appears that "Mr. Shaftoe, who comes in for Leominster, will, (to accommodate) relinquish his place to either of the candidates for Midhurst; on paying his expences, amounting to £2000, and on being secur'd by promise in some proper office . . .";² the office being obviously his intended profit on the transaction.

Similarly, £2000 were asked of Sir Thomas Clarke, Master of the Rolls, for a seat at Lostwithiel and refused by him; Lord Edgcumbe, however, asserted "that he cannot possibly defray the expence with less".³ Again, Lord Chesterfield, in a letter to his son, Philip Stanhope, October 19, 1764, speaks of "the £2000, which your seat [at St. Germans] cost you in the present Parliament". When Lord Thomond (the brother of Lord Egremont and brother-in-law of George Grenville) was returned both for Minehead and Winchelsea, £2000 were "to be paid by the person that comes in the room of Lord Thomond [at Winchelsea] . . .".⁴ Whilst a memorandum by the Duke of Newcastle, dated March 11, 1761, contains the following entries:

The Master of the Rolls.	}	£2000.
Sir William Baker.		
Admiral Rodney		

Ld. Falmouth has only £1500.⁵

¹ December 3, 1760; Add. MSS. 17495, f. 179.

² Add. MSS. 32920, f. 291.

³ *Ibid.* ff. 200 and 245.

⁴ *Ibid.* f. 220.

⁵ *Ibid.* f. 103.

In short, the ordinary price of safe seats in the disposal of patrons was in 1761 £2000, and only in exceptional cases, where other advantages were expected,¹ £1500; whilst in 1754 the price of £1500 for a seat, or £3000 for the brace, seems to have been of more frequent occurrence. But then the better chances of survival in a Parliament coupled with the life of the young King have to be remembered; and further, that owing to "credit-inflation" through war-loans, subscribed in excess of actually available means, the general level of prices had in those seven years, if anything, risen even more than the price of seats.

As for an invasion of "constituencies which had long obeyed the orders of great landlords" by a new class of candidates, "men without party connexion or local interest", *nouveaux riches* of every description,² the complaint is perennial, and yet always brought up as new. Lecky, starting with 1700, writes about "individual capitalists, and still more the two great corporations" (the Bank of England and the East India Company) which "descended into the political arena" and "wrested boroughs, by sheer corruption, from the landlords who had for generations controlled them . . .".³ Another author⁴ speaks about the "sensible alteration" which in 1747 "was found with regard to many of the boroughs": "The vast successes of the war, the prodigious prizes taken from the enemy, and the many advantages Britain had acquired in point of trade, enriched the marine and mercantile gentle-

¹ *E.g.* in Selwyn's offer to Bute of two seats at Ludgershall, at £1500 each.

² See p. 195, *n.*².

³ *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i. pp. 200-201.

⁴ I quote this passage from an article by Lord Ebrington (now the Earl of Fortescue) on *A Bye-Election in 1747*, published in *The Nineteenth Century*, in June 1889 (p. 922). It is marked as quoted from Ballantyne's *Life of Lord Carteret*, pp. 323-4, but I have failed to trace it in that book.

men to such a degree that numbers of them were able to aspire to seats in Parliament and were supported with a greater effusion of money than ever had been known to be expended on such occasions." For 1761, there are Horace Walpole's remarks to embroider upon; for 1768, the dictum of Lady Sarah Osborn: "The landed interest is beat out, and merchants, nabobs, and those who have gathered riches from the East and West Indies stand the best chance of governing this country."¹ But Sir Robert Peel, on the night of his defeat, June 25-26, 1846, still saw "the Manners, the Somersets, the Lowthers, and the Lennoxes" pass before him; and "those country gentlemen, 'those gentlemen of England' . . . Sir Charles Burrell, Sir William Jolliffe, Sir Charles Knightly, Sir John Trollope, Sir Edward Kerrison, Sir John Tyrrell, . . . Sir John Yarde Buller". "They trooped on: all the men of metal and large-acred squires. . . . Mr. Bankes with a Parliamentary name of two centuries and Mr. Christopher . . .; and the Mileses and Henleys were there, and the Duncombes, the Liddells, and the Yorkes"; and Walter Long from Wiltshire, and Charles

¹ *Political and Social Letters of a Lady of the Eighteenth Century, 1721-71*. Edited by E. F. D. Osborn (1890), p. 178. See also the very interesting, but unfortunately meagre entry in Cavendish's *Debates* under November 21, 1768 (vol. i. p. 61):

Several petitions were presented, complaining of undue elections. The House seemed to set themselves against the admission into Parliament of certain adventurers; men who, having no personal interest anywhere, go about canvassing from borough to borough, with their pockets full of money. It was said, that though there certainly was good reason to oppose their admission, yet if even such persons have a legal majority of votes (the bribery not being proved) they ought to be sitting members.

I have compared these remarks with the entries of election petitions noted on that day in the *Journals of the House of Commons*, but find it impossible to ascertain to whom the remarks referred—none of the Members returned for the boroughs discussed that day seems to come under that description.

Newdegate from Warwickshire. "But the list is too long," writes Disraeli; "or good names remain behind."¹

The truth of the matter is that the landed nobility and gentry of Great Britain (like British trade) are found dying whenever their condition is examined, but that in each generation their ranks and fortunes are restored by an infusion of blood and treasure from those who have acquired wealth in the (ever declining) trade.

As for social standing, the names of considerably more than half the Commons of 1761 were in the books of the peerage and baronetage. The rest were almost all of gentry origin. There were not more than a dozen men in the House who could be truly described as of obscure origin; and probably not more than forty for whom pedigrees had to be concocted under George III, as they had been for some older families under the Tudors or Stuarts. For even the list of the fifty merchants in the Parliament of 1761 contains many an old name: the Hon. Thomas Harley, son of the Earl of Oxford; the Hon. Thomas Walpole, son of Lord Walpole; Peregrine Cust, son of Sir Richard Cust, second Baronet; Frazer Honywood, descended from the famous Mary Honywood who "had at her decease [in 1620] lawfully descended from her 367 children", and who on one occasion is recorded to have entertained 200 of her progeny² (she could feed them once, but Robert Honywood, "her onlie husband", could not endow them all with landed estates); Arnold Nesbitt, of the Nesbitts of Lismore; John Bristow, of old gentry, brother-in-law to the Earls of Buckinghamshire and Effingham, etc.

The composition of the Parliament of 1761 can be examined from yet another angle: the family relation of the Members to their constituencies and to Parliament in

¹ Benjamin Disraeli, *Lord George Bentinck* (1852), pp. 299-300.

² See Nichols, *Topographer and Genealogist*, vol. i. pp. 397-411, "The Posterity of Mary Honywood"; also Morant, *Essex*, vol. ii. p. 167-70, and *Notes and Queries*, twelfth series, vol. iv. p. 234.

general. Roughly, 40 per cent of those returned in 1761 sat for constituencies which their ancestors in the *male* line had previously represented, in the majority of cases for generations; another 35 per cent belonged to old-established Parliamentary families, though they did not sit for family constituencies in the narrow sense of the term given it above; and only 25 per cent of the House of Commons had no Parliamentary ancestry.

This figure of 25 per cent might appear high, but it must not be brought up as in any way bearing out the contention about "the new class of candidates . . . without party connexions or local interest". For there was frequently a "local interest" without Parliamentary ancestry, and where there was neither, "party connexions" (if one can speak of "parties" in 1761) appear strongest. The majority of "merchants" were men without Parliamentary ancestry, but some of them had a very strong local interest, *e.g.* the Wiltshire clothiers; then there were men with local connexions arising from their profession, admirals at places such as Portsmouth, Plymouth, or Rochester, recorders at various boroughs, etc. Lastly, the 25 per cent include a number of men strongly rooted in their constituencies, but whose families for some reason or other had not sat before. As for civil servants or professional politicians put up by the Government or some political "connexion" for pocket boroughs, they did not require, and frequently had not, a local "interest" of any kind. Had Edmund Burke (to give the best-known example, though he did not enter Parliament till December 1765) a "local interest" at Wendover or Parliamentary ancestry? But it was just men like him who had the strongest "party" connexions; and he, though exceptional in ability, was not of a rare type.

The number of men in the Parliament of 1761 who were unsupported by family, "party", or local connexions, but sat merely because they had money and were prepared to

spend it on elections, was exceedingly small ; and of those who can be said to have thus entered it for the first time in 1761, there were perhaps three, if so many.

One last test shall be applied to the assertion that there was a vast change in the Parliament of 1761 by analysing the various types of " interlopers " named by those who make it.

To begin with the admirals supposed to have been enriched by prizes : five of those who sat at the dissolution no longer stood at the election of 1761, whilst only two entered the House for the first time ; on the balance a loss of three, though not a single admiral was among the unsuccessful candidates at the polls (junior naval officers are not taken into account, because those who stood for Parliament did so usually on a family interest, and not in an official capacity, nor on the strength of prizes).

As to East Indian nabobs " gorged with the spoils of the East ", there were only two : the famous Robert Clive, who at Shrewsbury kept out Lord Pulteney, the son of Lord Bath, a young man burdened with difficult parents, an unhappy youth, little character, and no merit ;¹ and Clive's cousin, faithful friend, and secretary, John Walsh, a man of good character and a scientist of mark. Besides these, a cousin of Clive's stood at Penryn, but was defeated, and Laurence Sullivan unsuccessfully attacked Thomas Walpole (and the family interest of the Dowager Lady Orford) at Ashburton—which in spite of rather strained family relations, may have impressed his cousin Horace. But one would indeed be sorry for a British House of Commons which had no place for a Clive ; as John Bennett, Mayor of Shrewsbury, explained to the irate and overbearing Earl of Bath in a letter dated June 27, 1759 : " The Colonel, being of a family of great antiquity and merit

¹ See on him, Mrs. Stirling's *The Hothams*, which contains some interesting letters from him to Charles Hotham ; also John Calcraft's Letter Books at the British Museum.

amongst us, and having so remarkably distinguished himself in the service of his country, was agreed by all to be a proper candidate.”¹ Besides Clive and Walsh, only some nine or ten merchants could be (remotely) classed as “East Indians”, because, together with much other big business, they had prominent interests in the East India trade and at one time or another were Directors of the East India Company (H. Crabb Boulton was the only one among these who had ever been out to India). In short, the nabobs in 1761 are a “mare’s nest”. It was only in the Parliament of 1768 that the “nabobs” for the first time became a more definite and more numerous body, provoking a scare-mongering indictment from Chatham, the grandson of Governor Pitt of Madras, and 1735–47 M.P. for Old Sarum, where the political foundations of his own branch of the Pitt family had been laid with money sent over from India. And it was not until about 1780 that the so-called “Bengal Squad” made its appearance, with adventurers of doubtful character, such as Richard Barwell, Paul Benfield, or General Richard Smith.

As for the “West Indians” and “West India merchants”, there were comparatively few big merchants in Great Britain in 1761 who, in one connexion or another, did not trade with the West Indies, and a considerable number of gentry families had interests in the Sugar Islands, just as vast numbers of Englishmen now hold shares in Asiatic rubber or tea plantations or oil-fields, without thereby becoming Asiatics. Classifying as West Indians those only who were born in the West Indies, had spent there part of their lives, had been members of the Assembly or Council or had held office in one of the islands, the number of West Indians returned at the general election of 1761 amounts to twelve, marking an increase of only two on their number at the dissolution.

Lastly, the “merchants”—a term as wide as “trade”

¹ See p. 322.

is even now. Of these some are already included among the East and West Indians, but taking them all over again one finds their total number in the new Parliament to have been 50, marking an increase of three on their number at the dissolution. There had been a very severe financial crisis in 1759, which re-occurred early in 1761. On May 28, 1761, Joseph Watkins, a London merchant, reported to the Duke of Newcastle: "Private credit is at an entire stand in the City, and the great houses are tumbling down one after the other, poor Touchet [M.P. for Shaftesbury, 1761-68] stop'd yesterday and God knows where this will end, for private paper has now no subsistence, every one is afraid of his neighbour. . . ." ¹ Touchet managed soon to reopen, but at least two other of the merchant M.P.'s (Bristow and Hennikey) were in similar difficulties, whilst William Belchier the banker, who had been prominent for years as dabbler in several boroughs ² and had sat for Southwark in the previous Parliament, had refrained from dabbling or standing at the general election of 1761, being bankrupt. Again the story of a mass attack from this quarter in 1761 is found to be a legend.

To sum up: the number of changes in the new Parliament was by no means greater than usual. The number of contests which were carried to the poll was, if anything, smaller. As to widespread corruption, there was a rise in the price of seats, fully justified by circumstances, but which anyhow can merely indicate the cost, not the extent

¹ Add. MSS. 32923, f. 282.

² John Gordon wrote to the Duke of Newcastle on May 4, 1754, that Belchier's brother had boasted the night before "that the banker had obtained eleven seats in parliament, and that he would be of the party that would oppose the ministry, and taulks in so lofty a state, as to vex better men, that such plebeians should be so seated with the best of the Kingdom" (Add. MSS. 32735, ff. 228-9). John Gordon or Sempil was a Government spy and an old driveller—the type of man usually employed to cater for the fears of "Administrations". But Belchier at that time certainly dabbled in several boroughs.

of corruption. Nor did the character of the House change to any appreciable extent: the number of admirals diminished; the East India Lobby (if one can at all speak of such a thing in 1761), the West Indians and merchants, increased very little. There was a time when writers dealing with the accession of George III would have prefaced their remarks with the Latin tag: *novus nascitur ordo rerum*. Consciously or sub-consciously, this idea still lingers at the back of people's minds; they forget that even an age pregnant with great events takes some time to give them birth. The Parliament elected in 1761 was remarkably normal.

IV

SECRET SERVICE MONEY UNDER THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE

IV

SECRET SERVICE MONEY UNDER THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE

ACCOUNTS AND LEGENDS

WHEN leaving the Treasury in July 1766, Lord Rockingham inquired of the old, experienced Duke of Newcastle how to close the secret service accounts and what to do with the money remaining in his hands. Newcastle thereupon sent him accounts covering part of the time he himself had been at the head of the Treasury.

. . . I have sent the two last books of the present King [he wrote to Rockingham on July 25, 1766, in a letter marked "*Very Secret*"], signed as usual by the initial letters of His Majesty's name; which is the method always used. I believe the late King used to burn them in the presence of the person, who was concerned; but I chose rather to bring the books away, and keep them for my own justification.

The arrear always went over to the next account; and, I suppose, I paid it to my Lord Bute who succeeded me; I am sure, I did not retain it myself. But I will enquire of Jones how that was.

You will see all the private money which pass'd thro' my hands in this reign; that it was much more than in the former reign: but I am afraid, your Lordship has found *that* very much increased, since.¹

Hugh Valence Jones, Newcastle's late private secretary, replied to his inquiry on July 26:

In answer to your Grace's question, whether I remember what was done with the money, which remain'd unpaid upon closing the

¹ Add. MSS. 32976, f. 243.

present King's *private account* in 1762;—I have the honour to acquaint your Grace, that, to the best of my recollection . . . the balance . . . was carried by your Grace to His Majesty, at the same time with the *book* which was signed by the King. If, after this, any doubt should remain, I am sure, I shall be able, in one minute, to clear it up, when I have the honor to see your Grace, and can have an opportunity of explaining the accounts, which were constantly attended to with the utmost care.¹

Going back to the time of Newcastle's resignation, one finds the closing of these accounts mentioned in a letter from Newcastle to Rockingham:

I was this day at Court [he wrote on May 14, 1762]. His Majesty was barely civil. . . . I desired the King's leave to attend His Majesty some day next week, to settle my *private account*; and that I hoped His Majesty would allow me to retire from my employment a day or two after the Parliament rose. His Majesty ask'd me whether I should go to Claremont? I said, yes; I might afterwards go to other places.²

That this was all the King had to say to him, "after near fifty years spent in the service and in undoubted zeal" for the Royal family, was to Newcastle a subject for justly bitter reflections,³ though the King's question, which seemed specially offensive to him, was the kind of question frequently asked by George III when embarrassed; and that he was, is shown by the fanciful account which, the same day, he gave to Lord Bute of the conversation:⁴

The D. of N. has been here and said he is preparing his accounts, that he may retire. I did not say anything more than that I hoped they would be full; he is to bring them next week. . . .

¹ Add. MSS. 32976, f. 279.

² Add. MSS. 32938, f. 264.

³ See, e.g., besides the letter to Rockingham quoted above, Newcastle's letter to the Duke of Cumberland, May 17, 1762; *ibid.* f. 306.

⁴ Bute MSS.; for date the King's letter is marked merely "45^m pt. 2", but obviously was written on May 14, 1762.

He obviously thought that this would have been the right kind of "spirited" remark to make to the oldest servant of the Crown; but as no mention of it occurs in any letter from Newcastle, though he revelled in complaints, one must assume that it was never made. Anyhow, the secret service accounts, which had always been "attended to with the utmost care", were "full"; and Rockingham, in accordance with the promise in his letter of July 26, 1766,¹ did "return them safe", and they are now among the Newcastle Papers at the British Museum.

Volume 33044 of the Additional Manuscripts contains what may be described as three "books"; of the first there is one copy, of the second three copies, and of the third two. The first is in the handwriting of John Roberts, who, as "the very faithfull secretary"² of Henry Pelham, had been entrusted by him with the secret service accounts, and who continued to keep them during Newcastle's first term at the Treasury, from March 1754 till November 1756. The book consists of rough notes, in which the names were originally indicated merely by initials, though a good many were filled in afterwards; it closes on November 9, 1756, with an entry of £1359:14:6, the balance in hand, paid over to Jones, Newcastle's private secretary. A clean copy was probably made from these notes for George II,³ but by 1766 Newcastle's overburdened memory and anxious mind no longer retained any record of what had passed about it with the King—in the letter to Rockingham he speaks of George II's

¹ Add. MSS. 32976, f. 254.

² Thus he is described on the monumental tablet put up to him by his sisters in Westminster Abbey; see my note on "Three Eighteenth-Century Politicians", in the *English Historical Review*, July 1927.

³ Newcastle, in November 1756, at the end of one of his last papers on secret service disbursements (Add. MSS. 32997, f. 72), puts the query: "What I shall do with the Book?"—but there is no reply to it.

way of dealing with secret service accounts as if he had never had any personal experience of it.

The next book ~~ends~~ ^{starts} in July 1757, after Newcastle's return to the Treasury, and virtually closes with the death of George II in October 1760. The first three entries, in what appears to be the original copy, are in the Duke's own handwriting, the rest in that of H. V. Jones, who continued to keep the accounts so long as Newcastle had the disposal of the money. At the death of George II they stop for almost five months; during these George III aspired to virtue and Bute to office, and no money was paid into, or disbursed from, the secret service fund; not even the late King's arrears were cleared. But when the rule of "religion and virtue" in the new reign had been secured by Bute's assumption of a Secretaryship of State, Administration was allowed to revert to its ordinary methods, and Newcastle to resume the management of the secret service money. On March 6, 1761, the day on which he "recommended" the appointment of Bute to the King, the "private pensions" appear at the head of his "Mem^{ds} for Lord Bute".¹ The subject of secret service money was thus opened up between them.

Five days later, Newcastle "receiv'd the King's orders to pay the arrears . . . up to Michaelmas last", and these accounts are incorporated in the "old book"; whilst the "new book", now opened, continues till May 25, 1762. The two together contain the "private account" mentioned on May 14; they were both submitted to the King by Newcastle at the parting interview, on May 26, and were initialled by him. Always afraid of prosecution and impeachment, Newcastle preserved them for his own "justification"; and indeed they serve this purpose, but in a way which was hardly in the Duke's mind—they dispose of the legends which have since grown up about secret service money and the use to which it was put.

¹ Add. MSS. 32919, f. 475.

Legends naturally surround all "secret service"; its very name inspires fear and distrust and stimulates men's imagination—it is believed to be wise and wicked, efficient and powerful. In reality, the most common characteristic of political "secret service" at all times is its stupidity and the unconscionable waste of money which it entails. Where its task is to obtain "intelligence", it most frequently produces tales which could not stand five minutes' cross-examination in a law court, but which, by the presumed nature of the service, are secured against effective criticism, and are made credible by being framed to suit the bias of the employers. Where the task of a secret service is corruption, it buys men whose services are not worth having, and, more often than not, changes into a mutual benefit society for pseudo-political parasites. Bribery, to be really effective, has to be widespread and open; it has to be the custom of the land and cease to dishonour the recipients, so that its prizes may be attractive for the average self-respecting man. Such was political corruption in Great Britain about the middle of the eighteenth century, and the true mystery about the secret service fund of that time is why it should have existed at all, when, to say the very least, nine-tenths of the subsidising of politicians was done in the full light of the day. But it did exist, supplying a subject for speculation to contemporaries, and a wide field for fanciful anecdote to later generations. The legend about the secret service has become deeply embedded in the history of the period; here are a few examples.

According to Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, John Roberts had avowed to a common friend of theirs "that while he remained at the Treasury, there were a number of members who regularly received from him their payment or stipend at the end of every session, in bank notes", and that the sums varied from £500 to £800. One would hardly guess that "a number of Members" stands for an average of

about 15 individuals in a House of 558 ; nor, when reading Mr. W. R. Williams's note on John Roberts in the *Dictionary of National Biography*—"it is said that he paid each ministerial Member from 500*l.* to 800*l.* per annum"—would one guess (had not Mr. Williams indicated the source) that "each ministerial Member"—there were nearly 400 of them—is his rendering of Wraxall's words "a number of Members". But that is how historical legends grow. The further stories in Wraxall—how Roberts used to squeeze the money into the hands of Members as they passed him, how Newcastle, Fox, etc., tried to get hold of the book of pensioners after Henry Pelham's death, and he (Roberts) delivered it to George II, who burnt it in the presence of Pelham's disconcerted successors—are too obviously embroidered to be accepted by any but the most uncritical readers. After Pelham's death, Fox refused the post of Secretary of State and Leader of the House of Commons, because Newcastle denied him its "management", *i.e.* the political patronage of which secret service money formed only a very small part; and it seems probable that Roberts submitted to George II Pelham's secret service book—the King's "private account", as it was called—and that the King burnt it as, according to Newcastle, was his habit. But Roberts continued for more than two years and a half in charge of the secret service funds under Newcastle; and in all probability the late recipients of the "King's bounty" from those funds, so far from wishing the fact to remain hidden from Newcastle, clamoured that, as successor to his ever-lamented brother, he should continue the favours bestowed on them by Henry Pelham. Certain lists preserved in the Newcastle Papers¹ seem to confirm (what one would have anyhow expected) that Newcastle was accurately informed of

¹ *F.g.* Add. MSS. 33038, f. 352, "Diminution of Pensions since April 1754"; and f. 415, containing a comparison of pensions in March 1754 and March 1755.

the secret service pensions paid at the time of Pelham's death.

Mr. W. J. Smith, the usually careful and well-informed editor of the *Grenville Papers*, found among them a letter from Lord Saye and Sele to George Grenville, dated November 26, 1763, wherein he returned a bill for £300 which Grenville had favoured him with that morning—"as good manners would not permit my refusal of it, when tendered by you"; he added that no spur was required to make him support Administration.¹ This letter Mr. Smith has printed "as an interesting illustration of the mode in which some part at least of the Secret Service Money was disposed of"; and the reader is left to picture to himself his Lordship much taken aback by the sudden offer of a bribe, but sufficiently self-possessed to postpone its return till he had reached his own house. G. E. C., in his *Complete Peerage*, in a footnote to the entry about Richard, 6th Viscount Saye and Sele, misquotes the letter as returning "a bill sent him for having supported the Administration", and remarks that his Lordship "shows himself neither insulted nor surprised at the offer". But why should he have been, on being paid the half-yearly instalment of a pension which, to begin with, he himself had urgently solicited and, next, had enjoyed for ten years, and which, though explained as help to enable him to attend the House of Lords, had been given as royal charity to a man of high rank and no means, rather than as a bribe? What needs to be explained is not why Grenville tendered him the bank bill, but why Lord Saye and Sele returned it. Did he wish to exchange it for a place both of honour and profit, or perhaps would he have preferred a step in the peerage? for by that time his financial position had changed considerably. Whatever his motives may have been, he still drew the same pension eighteen years

¹ Vol. 3, pp. 145-6, footnote.

later.¹ It is dangerous to quote a single letter relating to business of that description without a thorough knowledge of the circumstances, and of the habits and methods of the time.²

¹ See Secret Service Accounts of John Robinson, 1779-82, Add. MSS. 37836, ff. 61-114.

² Richard Fiennes, the great-grandson of the 1st Viscount Saye and Sele, was the son of a country clergyman, and succeeded in 1742 to the title, but apparently to very little besides. On April 3, 1750, he wrote to Lord Brooke (Add. MSS. 32720, f. 212) :

It has given me much concern that I have not had the opportunity of paying my respects to you to have acknowledg'd the great honour you did me by introducing me to his Grace the Duke of Newcastle who was extremely obliging and promised to recommend ~~me~~ to His Majesty's favour would I continue to attend the House of Lords till the latter end of last session of Parliament : which I accordingly did and should likewise have attended it this session . . . had suitable or even necessary means been ready for such an attendance, but as they were not then, so neither now are they : permit me therefore to renew my solicitations to your Lordship to speak to his Grace in my behalf ; and to acquaint him my neglecting Parliament was through necessity. . . .

P.S. If your Lordship thinks proper, communicate this letter with my duty to his Grace.

Lord Brooke forwarded this letter to Newcastle, adding from himself (April 13, 1750 ; Add. MSS. 32720, f. 209) :

. . . Your Grace will there see the true reason of his absence and likewise joined to that very little knowledge of the world and busyness renders his situation the more unhappy. I hope your Grace's goodness will . . . make this easy to him by soon procuring him such a settlement from the King's bounty that he may be enabled to attend his commands in a manner suitable to his rank. . . .

There are two more letters from Lord Brooke to the Duke of Newcastle, who had gone to Hanover with the King, pressing for a settlement for Lord Saye and Sele and assuring the Duke that he would be "found worthy of His Majesty's favour" (Add. MSS. 32721, ff. 287 and 495). The matter appears once more in a paper on "Requests from several Lords" (undated but apparently drawn up in 1753) : "Lord Say and Sele—a small pension—£600 p.a." (Add. MSS. 32995, f. 52). It was now granted, and it can be traced throughout the secret service accounts of 1754-56 and 1757-62 (see Add. MSS. 33044), and 1779-82

When, in 1756, the sum spent on "secret and special service" suddenly rose to the unprecedented height of over £140,000, Leicester House alleged, and which is more surprising, seems to have believed, that this addition was for buying votes in the House of Commons.¹ In reality, the expenditure of secret service money, in the strict sense of the term, was very moderate in 1756, and the true facts of the case can be learned from a letter which the Duke of Newcastle wrote to Lord Hardwicke on August

(Add. MSS. 37836, ff. 61-114). Presumably it was paid also during the intervening years.

Meantime Saye and Sele effectively provided for himself by marrying in 1754, at the age of thirty-seven, a widow of fifty-nine. "His Lordship was the last of his line," wrote *The Gentleman's Magazine* in the obituary note of the Viscountess in 1789 (vol. ii. p. 764), "and though he knew his title of viscount must become extinct if this sprig of evergreen should survive him, yet he thought it better to get possession of a good buxom widow of nearly threescore, with an excellent fortune, that would furnish him with all the comforts and elegancies of life, than to pass his days in straitened circumstances, merely for the purpose of transmitting splendid poverty to a son." "She was supposed to be the viscountess delineated in Hogarth's print of the Five Orders of Perriwigs, Coronets, etc."

Lastly, with regard to the style of Lord Saye and Sele's letter to Grenville, beginning with "Honoured Sir", it should be noticed that it is peculiar, and one hardly knows whether to presume in it an element of banter or merely see in it the involutions of a bizarre character, which Lord Saye and Sele seems to have been. Anyhow, it is not typical of anything I have seen in hundreds of volumes of correspondence dealing with patronage, pensions, etc.

¹ Samuel Martin, having put down the sums spent on secret and special service 1747-56, placed the following note against £90,000 of "special service" money: "N.B. This was the year wherein the Duke of Newcastle then at the head of the Treasury was much opposed in the House of Commons as to the grant of the subsidy stipulated by a Treaty of that year with the Empress of Russia."

The Martin Papers are not yet catalogued at this time (July 1928), and my best thanks are due to Mr. J. P. Gilson, Keeper of the Manuscripts at the British Museum, for allowing me access to them, and to Mr. R. Flower for his valuable help in examining them.

16, 1760.¹ That year (Midsummer 1759 to Midsummer 1760) the income of the Civil List produced £1,080,000, "£280,000 more than it was given for", and Newcastle submitted certain suggestions to George II as to presents to be made out of this surplus, among others one to the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick. When, on August 15, Newcastle brought the King a warrant for £5000 to the Hereditary Prince, the King "flew in a passion" and demanded that a warrant be made out

payable to himself; (as secret service). He would send it to Hanover, and that they should send it from Hanover to the Hereditary Prince; and make the most of it for him. I replied only, It is Your Majesty's own money; you may do with it what you please.

Still, Newcastle highly disapproved of the proposed method:

Could ever any thing be so cruel to me, as preventing me of all opportunity of shewing my regard to this great and deserving young Prince? Or could any thing be so cruel to the nation, as to let the German Ministers only have the merit? And this money, sent from hence to Hanover, have the appearance and merit of coming out of the revenue of the Electorate.

Though he had said nothing to the King that day, he proposed to speak to him about the matter when bringing "the warrant for the £5000 secret service" and to represent to him that "the immense sum in the Exchequer, on the account of the Civil List, is known to every clerk there" and may easily produce an inquiry in Parliament next session, and whilst a present to the Hereditary Prince would be popular, an addition to the secret service fund "will have the very contrary effect".

I will then instance the year, that I went out [1756]. The King had for special service, which was sent to Hanover for the payment

¹ Add. MSS. 32910, ff. 123-7.

of troops etc., 90,000*l.*, which we did not think advisable to lay before Parliament. I know the Princess of Wales said, that those great sums drawn that year on account of the Civil List, were employed for bribing the House of Commons, to approve the Russian treaty. The King does not know, what hurt he does to his own affairs.

The allegations made by Leicester House in 1756 took root in contemporary opinion and continue to be reflected in many a text-book of history. They implied that votes in the House of Commons were bought for particular divisions. There is no indication of this having ever been practised under Newcastle ; neither in the secret service accounts, nor in the mass of contemporary correspondence, have I found a single line which would supply any ground even for a suspicion of that kind. It might be argued that it is difficult to understand how allegations of that character gained credence if this was never done ; but anyhow, the complete absence of evidence of its having been practised is no less astonishing, and the burden of proof clearly rests with those who assert that votes for single divisions were bought.

Nor is it inherently probable that this was done. The buying of votes would naturally have occurred when it was the Government which was in distress, and not the individual Member ; but when votes were eagerly sought for, Members certainly did not need to prostitute themselves politically to the degree of accepting casual payments in lieu of the customary rewards for adherence to Administration, which were places, contracts, or pensions. The case of the Treaty of Paris will perhaps be urged against this contention, and although it falls outside the period covered by this essay, and I do not possess the same amount of evidence about it as about transactions during Newcastle's term of office, I shall take it as my last example of the growth of historical legends about the " secret service ".

Horace Walpole in his *Memoirs of the Reign of George III* recounts how Henry Fox, "leaving the grantees to their ill humour,"

directly attacked the separate members of the House of Commons ; and with so little decorum on the part of either buyer or seller, that a shop was publicly opened at the Pay Office, whither the members flocked, and received the wages of their venality in bank-bills, even to so low a sum as two hundred pounds for their votes on the treaty. Twenty-five thousand pounds, as Martin, Secretary of the Treasury, afterwards owned, were issued in one morning ; and in a single fortnight a vast majority was purchased to approve the peace !¹

This account has become the common property of history books and is reproduced and embellished, not quoted,² the writers apparently feeling no more the need to name their authority or to adhere to the exact terms of the statement than they would in saying that George II died in 1760.

What evidence is there to support it ? There is nothing about it in Horace Walpole's contemporary letters, but then very few are extant for that period ; nor even in the vast correspondence of Newcastle, where a great deal is said about blandishments, intimidation, and defections. Some evidence, which partly supports but also circumscribes Walpole's story, is to be found in British Museum MSS., which none of the historians who so glibly repeated it can have known. There is a computation in the Liverpool Papers of "Money issued for Secret and Special Service, from the year 1751 to the year 1763",³ and an entry in it shows that on December 9, 1762, i.e. the day of the first vote on the treaty, £25,000 were drawn by Samuel Martin for "secret service" ; and in the Martin Papers

¹ Edited by G. F. Russell Barker (1894), p. 157.

² See, e.g., Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (1892 edition), vol. iii. p. 225, and William Hunt, *History of England 1760-1801*, p. 40.

³ Add. MSS. 38335, ff. 214-15.

there is a copy of a receipt for this money which was paid over by him to the King.¹ These, obviously, are the £25,000 which according to Horace Walpole, Martin owned to have been "issued in one morning", and according to Mr. Lecky (who often treats statements as if they were cipher wires of which the wording must be changed for publication), "were expended in a single morning in purchasing votes". It is immaterial whether George II is said to have died, expired, or been no more, on October 25, 1760; but there

¹ It runs as follows:

GEORGE R.

We acknowledge to have received of our trusty and well beloved S. M[artin] Esq. the sum of 25,000: which sum in pursuance of an order dated the 9th day of December 1762 was issued to him at the receipt of our Exchequer for our special service. Given at our Court at St. James's this 10th day of December in the 3rd year of our reign.

Examined

G. R.

BUTE

The memory of these £25,000 seems still to have haunted Bute seven years later; for on November 4, 1769, as he was about to leave England "to try once more the effect of a warm climate during the winter months", he wrote to George III concerning the accounts of the Civil List expenditure which were about to be submitted to Parliament:

. . . of the summs issued during the year I had the honor to serve in the Treasury; some were for Secret Service, others for Special Services; which last were regularly delivr'd into Your Majesty's hands; and were dispos'd of by your Self; there was besides a sum of £25,000 issued on the tenth of December under the name of Secret Service, that I had the honor to carry to Your Majesty, in the same manner that I had done those before, that were issued for Your Special Service (*The Correspondence of King George III*, edited by Sir John Fortescue, vol. ii. p. 110).

As a matter of fact, in the accounts that sum was booked against Samuel Martin and Bute's name was not mentioned in this connexion; but his letter adds to our knowledge of the way in which this money was handled, and implicitly seems to confirm that this sum formed the financial substance of transactions to which usually very different dimensions are ascribed.

is a difference between money being "issued" and "spent". Martin's statement means that this unusually high sum was issued to him in a lump (which is correct), whilst Mr. Lecky's embellished version seems to suggest that more money was spent in the afternoon, or at least on other days. Now the facts are these: for years it had been usual for the Secretary to the Treasury to draw the sum of £10,000 about four times a year for the secret service; two instalments of that amount were drawn by James West, Newcastle's senior Secretary to the Treasury, on February 10 and May 26, 1762, and one by Samuel Martin on July 6; but on December 9 the sum drawn by Martin was £25,000; and the next issue to him for secret service was £10,000 on January 21, 1763. In other words, the sum drawn on the morning of December 9 was unusually high, but it was the only one paid into the secret service fund whilst Fox was securing a majority for the treaty; and if all this ammunition had been spent in one morning, one would have to conclude that nothing was left for the afternoon and for other days. The rise by £15,000 above the normal indeed requires explanation; and conversely, the amount to be explained is only £15,000, which is very much less than the current accounts of this transaction would make one expect.¹ But with regard to "confessions" such as that of John Ross Mackye, recorded or alleged by Wraxall,² one will require some better proof

¹ The explanation which I would tentatively suggest, until positive evidence is found, is this: Fox was securing a following for the new Administration; some resignations of office by opponents had been received, the dismissal of others was imminent; but the redistribution of places required time. The candidates on the waiting list received "pensions" in lieu of office and until "provided for". Votes were bought, but in a way different from that which is usually indicated; and the difference between securing a regular following and buying votes in the market is not unimportant.

² John Ross Mackye is reported by Wraxall (*Historical Memoirs*, (1836), vol. iv. p. 671) to have claimed, in 1790, at a dinner at Lord

than picturesque statements made under the influence of liquor, many years after the event, before accepting them as valid evidence either concerning the expenditure of secret service money or the methods of corruption.

PUBLIC PENSIONS AND SPECIAL SERVICE

The first thing to be ascertained with regard to "secret service" money as an instrument of Parliamentary corruption is what sums were available for the purpose. This necessitates a careful examination of all entries in the Civil List accounts which might possibly have covered disbursements of that description. Material for such an inquiry abounds in the Civil List accounts for the years October 1752 to February 1769, called for when George III asked the House of Commons to pay his debts, and submitted to it in January 1770;¹ in the Treasury Papers at the Record Office; in the Newcastle Papers at the British Museum; and in those of several Secretaries

Bessborough's, that it was through him that votes had been secured for the peace of 1763. "With my own hand I secured above one hundred and twenty votes on that most important question to Ministers. Eighty thousand pounds were set apart for the purpose. Forty Members of the House of Commons received from me, a thousand pounds each. To eighty others, I paid five hundred pounds apiece." The figures, it will be noticed, are as beautifully even as at a "sixpenny store". One would, however, like to know from what funds this money was taken and under what heading it was booked. The public accounts of that time are certainly not remarkable for their perspicuity; still, I have searched carefully and have failed to find any loophole through which a sum of that size could have been drawn. It is hinted by Wraxall that Mackye made the statement under the influence of "excellent champagne", to which he "was partial", and similar circumstances seem required to make one accept it.

¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, vol. xxxii. (1768-70), pp. 467-603. The table published in the *Grenville Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 144-5, consists of short and confused extracts and summaries from the papers. The original MS. accounts are in the Record Office, T. 38/226.

to the Treasury: James West, who, with a short interval in 1756–57, held that office from 1746 to 1762, Charles Jenkinson (1763–65), and John Robinson (1770–82). Certain difficulties arise from the year in various computations being calculated as from different days—Midsummer (July 5), Old Christmas (January 5), Old Lady Day (April 5); still in others as from October 25, the day of George II's death¹—and from the same items not being always classified in the same way; still, even though the figures supplied in the various papers do not invariably agree and the way in which matters are mixed up causes confusion, results sufficiently reliable for our purpose can be obtained from them without entering into a minute examination of the Treasury accounts.

A notebook of James West, preserved at the British Museum, contains "An Account of the Income and Expence of His Majesty's Civil Government", 1752–60.² The table opposite gives all the entries which might be suspected of having supplied money for "secret service"; I propose to examine them one by one.

A detailed account for each year of the "Pensions and Annuities" payable at the Exchequer can be seen in the Civil List accounts at the Record Office.³ They start with the first dukes of the Kingdom, pillars of the State; for some of these, pensions (most of which were presumably treated as "additional salaries" to Court offices) were merely a welcome and useful recognition of their importance, for others a necessary help to keep up the appearances of strength and splendour required from men placed so near the Throne. In 1754–55 the second on the list is the Duke of Grafton with £3000, followed by the Dukes of St. Albans and Somerset, and further on by

¹ *E.g.* in the accounts submitted to the House of Commons in 1770 the year starts in October.

² Add. MSS. 30205, ff. 10–13.

³ For 1754–59, T. 38/163, and for 1759–67, T. 38/164.

TABLE A

EACH YEAR IS CALCULATED TO JULY 5

[The items given below are from a table containing many more of a different character, and are not always placed consecutively in it.]

	1762.	1763.	1764.	1765.	1766.	1767.	1768.	1769.	1770.	July 5 to October 25, 1769.
Pensions and Annuities . . .	£ 30,607 0 2	£ 30,607 0 2	£ 30,607 0 2	£ 21,696 8 10	£ 21,873 1 7½	£ 21,380 5 6½	£ 23,315 4 8½	£ 23,542 9 0½	£ 24,526 16 5¼	£ 10,675 0 4
Ditto by Comparison from 1765 on-wards "per Master" . . .	31,290 5 4	31,800 15 4	32,224 10 4	30,904 6 0	30,942 0 4	31,633 5 4	32,344 17 2	31,711 0 1	31,991 6 2	14,006 14 7
More for French Pro-cessants . . .	£ 8,591 0 0	£ 8,591 0 0	£ 8,591 0 0	£ 8,591 0 0	£ 8,591 0 0	£ 8,591 0 0	£ 8,591 0 0	£ 8,591 0 0	£ 8,591 0 0	£ 4,295 10 0
Privy Purse . . .	36,000 0 0	36,000 0 0	36,000 0 0	36,000 0 0	36,000 0 0	36,000 0 0	36,000 0 0	36,000 0 0	36,000 0 0	9,000 0 0
Secretaries of State for Secret Service . .	6,000 0 0	6,000 0 0	6,000 0 0	6,000 0 0	6,158 17 7	5,790 19 7½	5,991 15 2	6,000 0 0	6,000 0 0	3,000 0 0
Secretary to the Post-master-General for Disbursements . .	4,510 0 0	4,510 0 0	4,510 0 0	4,510 0 0	4,510 0 0	4,510 0 0	4,510 0 0	4,510 0 0	4,510 0 0	1,127 10 0
Secret Service by Secretary to the Treasury . .	40,000 0 0	36,000 0 0	60,000 0 0	40,000 0 0	48,000 0 0	50,000 0 0	40,000 0 0	40,000 0 0	40,000 0 0	10,000 0 0
Contingencies ¹ of Divers Natures . .	68,548 0 11½	63,318 15 9½	67,127 10 2	56,873 4 5½	163,461 13 0½	96,873 8 3	101,216 14 6	98,765 11 6½	138,767 0 6½	112,641 13 9

¹ These divergences as to the sums spent on contingencies appear between the entries in James West's notebook and two tables in the Liverpool Papers (Add MSS. 38373, ff. 73-4, and 38376, ff. 223-4); but the two tables in the Liverpool Papers do not tally either, and the divergences in two years only; they are marked above.

² In all other tables, in the Treasury accounts at the Record Office (ff. 387, 163), the Newcastle Papers (Add. MSS. 35038, f. 37), in the Liverpool Papers (Add. MSS. 38376, f. 74, and 38377, f. 44), and in the Martin Papers, the sum drawn that year by James West for secret service appears as £38,000, and not £48,000; while John Roberts, who at that time handled the secret service money of the Treasury, acknowledges to have received only £36,000 (see Add. MSS. 35044, f. 27; this is the only discrepancy I have found between the sums issued to the Treasury for secret service, and Newcastle's secret service accounts). As to the difference of £10,000 between the sum for secret service as given in this table and as given in all the other tables, it should be noted that in the Treasury accounts (ff. 387, 163) the sum for "contingencies" in 1766 is given as £123,461 15 0½, i.e. £10,000 more than in West's table. It would, therefore, seem likely that an item of £10,000 has been transferred in his accounts to "contingencies" in 1766, was paid out to Nicholas Handings, the other Secretary to the Treasury, and formed part of the £50,000 sent that year by George II to Hannover. The figure of £38,000, and not £48,000, seems therefore correct.

³ This sum appears in the Treasury accounts as £112,571 4 1½.

the Dukes of Marlborough and Bolton; the next year the Duke of Rutland appears in the list, in 1757-58 the Dukes of Devonshire and Dorset, etc. Besides other English noblemen, there is every year a long list of Scottish peers;¹ some widows and orphans, the Fellows of Eton College, the Fellows and Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, readers of physick and modern history at Oxford and Cambridge, etc. etc., various deans, vicars, corporations, the poor of St. John the Baptist, and the churchwardens of St. Michael's, Cornhill, etc. etc. Not a single Member of Parliament appears in these lists; obviously it was not customary for Members of Parliament to figure in them (but one has only to turn over a few pages to find them drawing salaries as Grooms of the Bedchamber, as Keepers of the Records in the Tower or of His Majesty's Tennis Courts, Rangers of Windsor Forest or of some London park, as Tellers of the Exchequer, as Clerks of the Pells, or of Foreign Estreats, etc. etc.).

Next come the pensions "per Paymaster"; "by Compton" is merely a different description of the same thing—he was Paymaster at that time,² and, in 1755, was succeeded in the office by Lord Gage. In a speech which Alderman Beckford delivered in the House of Commons on February 28, 1769, during the debate on the arrears of the Civil List, he is reported to have said:

Are we, Sir, to have no account of this £800,000 [to be granted to the King]; disposed of, perhaps to influence the freedom of the country; to influence the freedom of this House? A pensioner is an alms-man. Why should not P.P., for public pensioner, be placed upon his shoulders, as well as upon the shoulders of a poor man?

¹ £5800, in a total of £8700, of these Scotch pensions are, however, marked in Add. MSS. 38338, f. 22, as "police, not pension".

² Charles Compton, fourth son of the 4th Earl of Northampton and father of the 7th Earl. He was consul at Lisbon, 1727-41, and envoy extraordinary, 1741-45. In 1745 he was appointed Paymaster of Pensions, was returned to Parliament for Northampton on December 9, 1754, and died on November 20, 1755.

An alms-man cannot vote; and why should a pensioner? . . . I want to see a list of the pensions paid by Lord Gage, paymaster of the band of pensioners. . . .¹

Obviously he expected to find many Members of Parliament on that list—would he have found any?

In the accounts at the Record Office more than half the money spent on these pensions appears under the summary heading "To clear Pensions and Annuities payable in this Office", but a detailed list for the year 1754 is preserved among the Newcastle Papers.² It is as varied as that of the "Pensions and Annuities" payable at the Exchequer, but on the whole is of a less dignified character. Its so-called "English list" contains 124 entries, of which no less than 83 are pensions to women, British and foreign, and another 10 or 12 to male foreigners (among them appears the famous Handel with a pension of £400 a year). The Englishmen in this book are a very mixed gathering, but their pensions seem invariably of a charitable rather than a political character; some are, presumably, to old servants and amount to £10 a year, and some to great noblemen, *e.g.* the Duke of Somerset appears again with a pension of £1000. At the very utmost, two entries in the list refer to Members of Parliament, but neither case is absolutely certain.³ Next follows a list of

¹ Cavendish, *Debates*, vol. i. p. 268.

² Add. MSS. 33044, ff. 1-17.

³ The entry "Thomas Pelham, Esq. £800" seems to refer to Thomas Pelham of Stanmer, M.P. for Rye 1749-54 and for Sussex from 1754 till 1768, when he succeeded Newcastle as Lord Pelham. I can find no one else in 1754 to whom this entry could refer, but having failed to trace anything about such a pension in the correspondence between Thomas Pelham and Newcastle, I cannot treat this identification of the recipient as proved, though it seems highly probable. The second entry mentioned above reads: "William Chetwynde, Esq. £100". This may refer either to W. Chetwynd, M.P. for Stafford (Inspector of Plays in the Lord Chamberlain's Office, £400 p.a.—see Add. MSS. 32995, f. 46), or to W. Chetwynd of Grindon, Warwickshire, who was not in Parliament. The smallness of the pension seems to point to the latter.

“other pensions or charities”—to clergymen, professors, schoolmasters, to the poor of certain parishes, etc. Lastly, there are the payments to French Protestants. I have no list of these pensions for any other year, but there is no reason to assume that their character was different; while it is clear that in 1754 they were not an instrument of political corruption. Nor is there any record in Newcastle’s voluminous correspondence during the next eight years of such a pension having been solicited or obtained by a Member of Parliament.

As for the “Privy Purse”, under George II no money from it is known to have been used for elections or for pensions to Members of Parliament; at least I have found no hint to that effect in Newcastle’s domestic correspondence, of which elections, places and pensions are the main topics. George III, beginning with November 1777, set aside £1000 a month from his Privy Purse (which was higher than under George II) for financing elections; possibly he may have used some minor sums from it to support his friends also at the general election of 1761, but so far I have never found any evidence to prove it.

To take the last item not directly described as “secret service” but which might be suspected of having covered money for Parliamentary corruption—the “Contingencies”. Their ordinary purposes are clearly shown in the Civil List accounts and are enumerated in James West’s notebooks:

Contingencies are under divers heads, vizt. law charges, rewards for services, liberates at the Exchequer, surplus on sheriffs’ accounts, and rewards for apprehending highwaymen, disbursements, printers of their bills, riding charges to messengers, post fines, City impost, rents payable by the Crown.¹

It is stated in an analysis made in 1763 and preserved among the papers of Charles Jenkinson that “the necessary

¹ Add. MSS. 30219, f. 11, and Add. MSS. 30216, f. 120.

expenses under this head do not amount to more than £57,729 : 6 : 2½ a year"; and this is the sum at which the contingencies approximately stood during the years 1751-55.¹ But also expenditure of a different and more mysterious kind, described as a rule as for "special service", was included under "contingencies", causing their sum total to vary considerably during the concluding years of George II's reign. A digest in the Liverpool Papers—"Particulars of the Sums paid for Contingencies in the Civil List Account for ten years ended the 5th day of July, 1760"²—supplies a convenient survey of the principal items of "special service" money issued during the years 1756-60; the list is not complete, but as it is not here a question of a minute and exhaustive analysis, it will serve the purpose.

	In the Year ending July 5.				
	1756.	1757.	1758.	1759.	1760.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£	£ s. d.
To the Secretaries of the Treasury for special services	90,000 0 0*	10,000 0 0	..	30,000	20,520 14 0
To John Thornton, Esq., for special services . .	16,933 6 6	10,520 11 6	..	..	..
To James Wallace, Esq., for special services . .	..	..	18,000 0 0	..	..
To Andrew Drummond, Esq., for special services . . . .	..	..	20,665 18 0	..	..
To Richard Stratton, Esq., for special services . . . .	..	..	5,251 10 0	..	..
To Baron Münchhausen . . . .	..	..	1,585 0 0	..	..

* £50,000 of this sum was issued in weekly instalments of £10,000 between September 23 and October 21, 1755; see Add. MSS. 33038, ff. 450 and 472.

Although I am not able fully to explain every single position, so much can be shown, that this money was used

¹ See "An enquiry into the extraordinary expences of His Majesty's Civil Government . . . in . . . 1763 . . .", Add. MSS. 38338, f. 104.

² Add. MSS. 38332, f. 223.

for service abroad, and not at home.¹ Thus the £90,000 drawn by James West and Nicholas Hardinge in 1755-56 are obviously those transmitted by George II to Hanover and mentioned by Newcastle in the letter to Hardwicke on August 16, 1760.² Similarly the £20,520 14s. in 1759-60 booked against the Secretaries to the Treasury seem to have been sent to Germany.³ The payments to John Thornton, the London banker, one may confidently assume, because of their date, his person, and the "fees" charged *on them*,⁴ to have been for "presents" at the Russian Court—he had the remittance of Government money to Russia.⁵ When, in 1759, Robert Keith was charged with certain negotiations at St. Petersburg, he was authorised to make "private presents to proper persons", and "to

¹ I have not read the papers in the Newcastle MSS. dealing with diplomatic affairs; in these, presumably, detailed explanations could be found for the above disbursements. The only one among them of which I cannot define even the character is that of £10,000 in 1757; possibly the entry of £10,000 paid "to the innholders which will be repaid"—whatever this may mean—refers to it; see paper signed by James West, Add. MSS. 33039, f. 13.

² See above, pp. 224-5.

³ There is a note among the Newcastle Papers (Add. MSS. 32894, f. 209), docketed August 15, 1759, which seems to refer to this transaction: "Nicholas Mageus, Esq., proposes to send the neat value of 20,000£ sterling to Messrs. Hanbury & Halsey merchants at Hamburgh with directions that they shall dispose of the money in such manner as Prince Ferdinand shall be pleased to order. . . ." £20,520 : 14s. would be "the neat value of 20,000£" plus charges for transmission.

⁴ It appears from the Treasury accounts at the Record Office (T. 38/163) that £16,000 in 1756 and £10,000 in 1757 were paid to John Thornton "to reimburse the like sum expended by him for His Majesty's service", whilst £933 : 6 : 6 and £520 : 11 : 6 were for "fees attending the same"; the percentage is that of rather costly foreign remittances. A further confirmation of this money having been used for Russia is supplied by a paper of James West drawn up in 1757 (Add. MSS. 33039, f. 13) containing the entry "for Russia £28,933 : 6 : 6", which is obviously the sum total of the first remittance with fees charged on it, and the second, without the fees.

⁵ See, e.g., Add. MSS. 32861, ff. 175 and 208.

give as far as twenty thousand pounds sterling to such person or persons as can bring His Majesty's wishes to bear. The money to be paid upon the exchange of the ratifications".¹ A similar authorisation, up to £100,000, was again given to Keith by Lord Bute on February 6, 1762,² and a letter of credit for that amount was issued to him from Messrs. Thornton & Cornwall in London on Messrs. Ritter, Thornton & Cayley at St. Petersburg.³ Payments made in these circumstances had naturally to appear as for "special service", and in order to provide some cover for them in public accounts, they were booked against the banker through whom they were made. Similar transactions were covered by the entries which appear against two other London bankers, Andrew Drummond and Richard Stratton.⁴ As for James Wallace, he was at that time Under-Secretary of State in the Northern Department, and his name once more suggests foreign service.

¹ Lord Holdernessee to Mr. Keith, February 13, 1759; Add. MSS. 30999, f. 11. Holdernessee, however, forgot to inform Keith "in whose hands the money was lodged", which did not matter much, as Keith had no occasion for it at that time; see letter from Sir R. M. Keith, *Memoirs and Correspondence* (1849), vol. i. p. 34. Curiously enough, this letter from Keith, which is obviously a reply to the preceding, is dated in this collection, "St. Petersburg 2/13 May 1760".

² Add. MSS. 30999, f. 14.

³ Add. MSS. 32934, f. 193.

⁴ These two sums are thus analysed in the Civil Service accounts for 1757-58 (T. 38/163, p. 48): "To Andrew Drummond & Co. to answer the following bills of exchange drawn on them by Joseph Yorke, Esq., at the Hague [British Ambassador to the States-General] for His Majesty's service, viz.:

	£	s.	d.
A bill from abroad	3,207	0	0
Fees attending the same	172	11	6
Sundry bills from abroad and fees attending the same	17,286	6	6
	<hr/>		
	20,665	18	0
Richard Stratton to reimburse expences for His Majesty's special service	5,000	0	0
To defray fees and charges attending the receipt thereof	254	10	0
	<hr/>		
	5,254	10	0

Lastly, the exceedingly high sum of £112,641 : 13 : 9 entered for "contingencies" between July 5 and October 25, 1760, is shown by the Treasury accounts¹ to have covered £79,490 : 15 : 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ to Philip Adolph, Baron von Münchhausen (the Hanoverian Resident in London) "for his late Majesty's special service";² and "to Nicholas Magens, Esq.,³ to be remitted to the Marquis of Granby, to be paid by his Lordship into the hands of the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick £5000", with £364 : 2 : 6 in "fees attending the receipt thereof";⁴ etc.

Thus contingencies also do not seem to have yielded money for Parliamentary corruption. But the mystery which surrounded the "special service", and the fact that so much of its money was drawn through the Secretaries to the Treasury, who were also in charge of the domestic secret service funds, have given rise to legends and continue to confuse the accounts in various summaries of the expenditure of that period.⁵

¹ T. 38/164.

² This money was to be repaid into the Exchequer (see Newcastle's paper on the money remaining in the Exchequer at the death of George II; Add. MSS. 33045, f. 141); and it was in fact repaid (see T. 38/200).

³ A London banker who, together with Amyand, had frequently the remittance of Government money to Germany; see, e.g., Add. MSS. 32878, B. 214-15, 32881, B. 331-2, and 32889, 1. 96.

⁴ See about it also Newcastle's Memorandum of August 19, 1760 (Add. MSS. 33040, f. 5): "Mr. Magens. His proposal about the 5000£ present, whereby no mortal can know any thing of it, 'till the money is certainly given by my Lord Granby, from the King, to the Hereditary Prince." This is the present discussed on pp. 224-5.

⁵ In time George III had to suffer from the same imputations with regard to "special service" money that Leicester House had made against the Government in the days of his grandfather. In a letter to Lord North, on February 28, 1771 (Donne, *Correspondence of King George III with Lord North*, vol. i. p. 60), when discussing the question whether to spend money on "the gaining the Court of Sweden", he remarked:

. . . as there is no publick mode of obtaining the money that is

SECRET SERVICE ACCOUNTS

Under "secret service" disbursements, labelled as such, there occurs, first of all, a standing payment of £6000 a year to the two Secretaries of State, £3000 to each. The nature of these payments is incidentally explained in a speech which George Grenville delivered in the House of Commons on March 2, 1769, during the debate on the arrears and debts due upon the Civil List; whilst analysing its expenditure he described these "secret service" payments as "an annual salary added to the . . . Secretaries of State".¹ That this was their character and purpose seems further confirmed by the very considerable discrepancy between the salary of the Secretaries of State as entered in the Civil List accounts—£1850 each—and the average of £5780 p.a. at which "the clear profits of the office of Secretary of State" during the seven years, 1747–1753, are put in the paper drawn up for Newcastle on the subject.² Presumably the £3000 of so-called "secret service" money have to be added, the rest being made up from fees, *e.g.* on commissions issued from the office. Thus this item of "secret service" can hardly, in fairness, be treated as such, and anyhow had nothing to do with Parliamentary corruption.

Next, there is a regular payment of secret service money

expended in that corruption, it must be taken from my Civil List, consequently new debts incurred; and when I apply to Parliament for relieving me, an odium cast on myself and Ministry, as if the money had been expended in bribing Parliament.

¹ Sir Henry Cavendish, *Debates of the House of Commons*, vol. i. p. 294. See also the remark in a letter from George Grenville to Thomas Whately, July 20, 1766 (*Grenville Papers*, iii. p. 276), about "half England" really believing "that the three thousand pounds a-year which was payable to Mr. Pitt as Secretary of State now lie unapplied" [in the Treasury].

² See below, p. 281.

to the Post Office,¹ from 1745 till the death of George II fixed at £4510 a year,² but higher under George III. A list of disbursements from this fund for the year ended on April 5, 1763, is published in the *Grenville Papers*; ³ it was transmitted to George Grenville by Anthony Todd, Secretary to the Post Office :

The Bishop of Bath and Wells	£500	Brought forward	£3375
Thomas Ramsden	500	Peter Hemet	300
Edward Willes	500	Stephen Dupuy	300
Thomas Willes	300	John French	300
James Wallace	400	John Ernest Bode, jun.	300
James Rivers	200	William Augustus Bode	200
Peter Morin	250	John Ulrick Selshop	100
Cuchet Juvenel	150	John Calcott	60
John Ernest Bode, jun., £400 ; extra allowance, £100	500	James Holcome	40
The same person for Seals, &c.	75	James Sanders	60
		Anthony Todd	750
		The same person for dis- tributing these allow- ances	25
Carried forward	£3375		£5810

This list, besides a few parasites ⁴ present in every secret service list in the eighteenth century, contains almost

¹ About this George Grenville, in the speech quoted above, made the following remark, the meaning of which I do not fully understand : " That is a hardship upon the King's revenue (when in office I thought it unjust)."

² For the way in which that figure was arrived at in 1745, see T. 53/41, pp. 466-7 and 675. A full list of the recipients is given, and, as in 1763, it includes no Members of Parliament.

³ Vol. iii. p. 311. The sum total of this list falls short of the £6089, which appear as drawn during that year for the Post Office Secret Service in a computation of payments made for this purpose, 1727-65, preserved among the Liverpool Papers (Add. MSS. 38339, f. 19).

⁴ The Bishop of Bath and Wells was Edward Willes, a younger brother of the Lord Chief Justice, and already in 1745 he was in receipt of secret service money from the Post Office ; Edward Willes, jun., was the third son of the Chief Justice, a barrister, M.P. from 1747-54 and 1767-68, when he became one of the Justices of the King's Bench.

exclusively civil servants, and not a single sitting Member of Parliament. The Bode family were a regular Post Office dynasty still connected with it in the beginning of the nineteenth century ;¹ one of the functions of J. E. Bode, sen., in 1763 was, as Todd mentions in the covering letter to Grenville, "engraving the many seals we are obliged to make use of" (counterfeit seals for letters opened in the Post Office). Peter Hemet was a superannuated Post Office official, Thomas Ramsden ("Latin secretary to the King"), James Wallace, James Rivers, and Peter Morin were past or present Under-Secretaries of State of the humbler kind—none of them ever sat in Parliament, and they were clerks rather than politicians ; similarly, Cuchet Juvencel²

There seems to have existed some connexion between the Willes family and the Post Office ; and in 1801 two members of the Willes family, Edward and Francis, still appear among its employees. An interesting "Memorial" by Anthony Todd, written on the death of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, in November 1773, is published by Sir John Fortescue in *The Correspondence of King George III*, vol. iii. pp. 38-40. It pleads for using the money assigned to the secret department of the Post Office for rewarding those who work in it and "are underpaid", describes the giving away of that money to strangers as "a check to the service", and expresses the hope "that the nature of the service will now be so clearly settled and understood, as that no part of the money allowed for carrying it on may ever hereafter be diverted from the purposes for which it was granted".

¹ See entries in the Liverpool MSS. in 1801, Add. MSS. 38357-8.

² At one time he was provincial agent for North Carolina. Between 1761 and 1767, he is repeatedly mentioned as a clerk in the office of the Secretary of State for the Southern Department (see *Home Office Papers*), and in July 1765 he was appointed private secretary to the Duke of Grafton, then Secretary of State (see *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1765, p. 348). On April 6, 1767, he was made one of the Clerks of the Privy Seal and Register of the Court of Requests (*H.O. Papers*, 1766-69, p. 265). At the Privy Seal Office, he became attached to Chatham. He lived in a house on Lord Chatham's estate at Hayes, cashed his annuity for him at the Exchequer, and even incurred debts on his behalf (see Chatham MSS. at the Record Office, G.D. 8/47). He died in 1786.

belonged to the minor official fry. These men, who would now be Foreign Office officials, seem to have been attached to the secret service of the Post Office for the double purpose of reading intercepted foreign correspondence and of drawing additional emoluments. "I am informed", wrote James Wallace to Lord Bute on May 11, 1761, "that the payments of the secret service branch of the Post Office, which have been suspended ever since His Majesty's accession by reason of the alteration made in the Hereditary Revenue of the Crown, are now about to be put in course again from the time of suspension." The post he had held in that office since 1749 was "the German clerkship, the functions of which consist in translating the intercepted letters that are in the German or Dutch languages".¹

Thus for purposes of Parliamentary corruption, we are finally left with no other secret service money than that paid to the Secretaries to the Treasury, which (with one single discrepancy of £2000 in 1756)² will be found to correspond exactly to the sums accounted for in Newcastle's secret service books. The table printed overleaf from the Liverpool Papers³ covers almost the whole of George II's reign, and gives the money received and disbursed for secret service free of all "special service" accessories, which are lumped with it in many other tables; each year is calculated till Midsummer (July 5).

To complete the table of the secret service money of the Treasury under George II, we have to add £10,000, issued to West on September 29, 1760.

¹ Bute MSS.

² See table opposite p. 230, footnote (2).

³ See "An Accompt shewing the Monies issued for . . . secret service . . . from Midsummer 1727 to Midsummer 1760 . . ." (Add. MSS. 38337, f. 44). The same figures appear in a paper in the Newcastle MSS. covering the years 1730-57: "An Accompt of all Monies issued for Secret Service since the year 1730 distinguishing each year" (Add. MSS. 33039, f. 37).

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
1728.	45,743	14	0	1745.	24,000	0	0
1729.	57,880	0	0	1746.	22,000	0	0
1730.	53,391	0	0	1747.	41,000	0	0
1731.	63,918	0	0	1748.	33,000	0	0
1732.	73,781	8	0	1749.	38,000	0	0
1733.	87,470	0	0	1750.	29,000	0	0
1734.	117,145	19	0	1751.	32,000	0	0
1735.	66,630	1	10	1752.	40,000	0	0
1736.	95,312	10	4	1753.	35,000	0	0
1737.	61,999	10	0	1754.	50,000	0	0
1738.	72,827	19	0	1755.	40,000	0	0
1739.	74,249	16	0	1756.	38,000	0	0
1740.	80,116	8	5	1757.	50,000	0	0
1741.	80,976	15	2	1758.	40,000	0	0
1742.	64,949	5	5	1759.	30,000	0	0
1743.	54,300	0	0	1760.	40,000	0	0
1744.	34,970	0	0				

It will be noticed that the disbursements of secret service money through the Secretaries to the Treasury regularly increased about the time of a general election (1734, 1741, 1747, and 1754); that the expenditure was specially high during the last years of Sir Robert Walpole's administration, whilst he fought desperately for his political existence; that it was lowest during Henry Pelham's time at the Treasury (August 1743–March 1754), which serves further to explode the story of the numerous secret service pensions paid at that time to Members of Parliament by John Roberts. The secret service fund of the Treasury was used for various purposes, and never more, and often considerably less, than one-third of it went in pensions to Members of the House of Commons; the average total under Pelham, including years of general elections, amounted to something over £30,000; how many pensions of £500–800 a year could be carved out of, say, even £10,000 £. A comparison of the totals during the years when Henry Pelham was at the Treasury with those of Newcastle suggests that Pelham's mysterious books—

according to Wraxall, "too sacred and confidential to be thus transferred over to the new Ministers"—did not differ widely from those preserved in the Newcastle Papers, except that Pelham was more economical, and better fitted than his brother to withstand the importunities of political beggars.

THE GENERAL ELECTIONS OF 1754 AND 1761, AND THE
NURSING OF CONSTITUENCIES

The accounts which John Roberts kept under Newcastle as First Lord of the Treasury open on March 21, 1754, on the eve of the general election, and naturally during the next two or three months election expenses rank foremost. On March 13 James West wrote to Newcastle that he had received his commands through Lord Dupplin "to know what engagements Mr. Pelham had mentioned to me relative to the next election". In reply he sent Newcastle the following paper—"all that I know from himself";¹ the paper² is annotated in the margin by John Roberts, whilst further information can be obtained from a series of papers in Roberts's handwriting preserved in Add. MSS. 32995.

Shoreham. Agreed to defray all expences exceeding £1000 for Mr. Bristowe.³

Barnstaple. Agreed to defray all expences exceeding £1500 to Mr. Amyand. £1000 has been already advanced.

Evesham. Agreed to defray all expences exceeding £1500 to Mr. Alderman Porter.

Totness. Agreed to be at the whole expence for the Master of the Rolls in case he had stood, but as he has declined and (by

¹ Add. MSS. 32734, f. 237.

² *Ibid.* ff. 239-40.

³ In the paper of March 16, 1754 (Add. MSS. 32995, f. 96)—this engagement is differently stated: "Mr. Philipson—Shoreham, his son Mr. Bristowe to come in by agreement with Mr. Stratton. To be paid £1000 to assist him, and to expend another 1000 by himself." About Phillipson, see essay on Harwich, pp. 443-51.

me) acquainted Mr. P[elham] it was very indifferent to him, whether he was in Parliament now, or on any future vacancy, that engagement is at an end; tho' there is an old claim of the Corporation for discharge of a debt of 800£. Mr. P. was to have seen the D. of Somerset, for his son, to join Mr. Trist.

Worcester. Mr. P. feared this would cost 4 or 5000£ and advanced some money to Mr. Tra[cy] and his agent Mr. Lilly.¹

[Marginal remark in John Roberts's handwriting: "Mr. P. seemed desirous to break off all engagements here, if he had known how to extricate himself."]²

Honiton. Agreed to advance a certain sum in support of Mr. Yonge.

[John Roberts: "This measure was not agreeable to Mr. P."]

Saltash. The candidates³ were to be at the whole expence as settled with Mr. Cleveland.

Old Sarum. The sum uncertain, complained greatly of its being too excessive.

¹ In the paper of March 18, 1754, *ibid.* f. 98: "Mr. Tracey—has had 1000£ for his election, demands 3500 more—offers to desist for 2000—to be chosen at another place, and if not chosen will return 1000£." Newcastle's remark against it: "will lay it before the King".

² Several letters from Tracy to Pelham and Newcastle dealing with the Worcester election are preserved among the Newcastle Papers. The last (Add. MSS. 32734, f. 332), dated March 24, 1754, runs as follows:

My Lord Duke,

I beg your immediate answer whether the £2500 will be paid, £1000 tomorrow, and the remaining £1500 when I go down; if these terms are not agreed to, and you will be pleased to determine tonight whether you will or will not make them good, I shall trouble neither the King nor your Grace any further, nor shall I be with you on Thursday morning, but will stand the poll for Worcester unassisted by your Grace, and free, I thank God, from all obligations. Your Grace must be peremptory tonight, or you will see me no more.

P.S. Tomorrow I shall begin executing the plan necessary to secure my election, and will be put off no longer. Newcastle⁴ managed "to extricate himself" (about it see also Add. MSS. 32995, ff. 104 and 115) and Tracy was not elected; but this was not the last Newcastle saw of him.

³ Lord Duncannon and Admiral George Clinton.

[John Roberts : "A sum has been advanced." ¹]

Reading. Mr. D[odd] has already received £1000 and the engagement stands for 5 or 600*l.* more.²

Glocester. Mr. P. had agreed to be at some part of the expence, the quantum not known.

[John Roberts : "As far as I was informed, expressions were very loose and general here."]

Wallingford. Agreed to be at some part of the expence.

[John Roberts : "Some assistance has been given which is best known to a certain person." ³]

Lord Edgcumbe and Lord Falmouth were to have received largely out of the last money.⁴

Kent. 2000*l.* advanced on a bad security by Mr. Galfridus Mann to Mr. Fairfax which Mr. West has obliged himself to pay Mr. Mann, and Mr. Pelham has obliged himself to pay to Mr. West.⁵

[John Roberts : "This sum was £2233 : 3 : 2."]

A few more engagements have to be added to the above. In a paper regarding arrangements made between Mr.

¹ £1000 (see Add. MSS. 32995, f. 120); but these were reimbursed by Lord Bath (see p. 538).

² In the paper of March 16, 1754 (*ibid.* f. 99): "Mr. Dodd—Reading—has received 1000*l.*—was promised 500*l.* more—and that it would not be lost for 3 or 400 more."

³ In the paper of March 16, 1754 (*ibid.* f. 97): "That Mr. Sewel was *promised* to have the expences for Wallingford born, after he had expended 1000*l.* of his money—That in consequence of that promise he had received already 1200*l.*—and that more will be wanting—[remark opposite, presumably by Newcastle: 'NB. Mr. Roberts says some money has been already advanced—That I can give no answer till I have laid it before the King.'] And if Mr. Sewell did not succeed there, he should be brought in somewhere else, at a convenient time" [remark against it: "To that I can say nothing."]. In the paper of March 21 (*ibid.* f. 112) Sewell is stated to have "had already 1250*l.*", and the remark is added that he "desires nothing further at present; that he has now 300*l.* in cash, but will let me know, when further expence will be necessary".

⁴ "Last money" presumably means the last payment made into the secret service fund.

⁵ About the transactions concerning Kent, see essay on Fairfax, pp. 502-4.

Pelham and Lord Dupplin in January 1754,¹ it is mentioned that "incidental expences of £170" at Camelford were "to be defrayed by the Government"; that "Mr. Fox told the Duke of Newcastle, that Sir Thomas Clavering had already paid £2000 [at Shaftesbury] and that Mr. Pelham had promised to pay what was wanting above that sum". In the paper of March 21² it is noted that Mr. Hitch, Young at Steyning, "was promised to have 1000£ given to defray his expences". On July 18, 1754, John Roberts, in a letter concerning the Westminster election, explained to Newcastle that Sir John Crosse had declared he would not put up more than £500,³ and, as this was obviously insufficient, Pelham tried to find some one who would go the length of £2000, but having failed, accepted Sir John Crosse's offer. Edward Cornwallis, the other candidate for Westminster, claimed to be let off all expense, and his reasons "seem indeed to be well founded as Mr. Hardinge is elected at Eye in his room by Lord Cornwallis".⁴ The opposition at Westminster was hopeless and was put up solely "to occasion money to be spent".

I do not wonder, that, after the care your Grace has taken to keep down the expences and claims from every quarter, this large demand [£1800] should give you some uneasiness; at the same time it will not escape your Grace's judgment, how necessary it is that it should be satisfied. . . .⁵

Further, on March 25, 1755, the Duke of Marlborough reminded Newcastle of the engagement with regard to the Oxfordshire election of 1754.

. . . when Lord Macclesfield sett up Lord Parker to support the Whig cause, poor Mr. Pelham promiss'd with the King's consent and knowledge, he should receive to support the necessary expences

¹ Add. MSS. 32995, ff. 63-5.

² *Ibid.* f. 112.

³ See also *ibid.* f. 98.

⁴ Nicholas Hardinge was Joint Secretary to the Treasury, and Eye was a pocket-borough of Lord Cornwallis.

⁵ Add. MSS. 32736, ff. 53-4.

four thousand, and afterwards three, in all seven thousand, of which Lord Macclesfield has I believe as yett receiv'd but two. . . .¹

Let us now extract from John Roberts's accounts the disbursements made on the general election of 1754; they can be easily distinguished, and an additional check is supplied by a paper compiled for Newcastle on the eve of the general election of 1761 and marked "Disbursements for Parliament from March 21st, 1753 [obviously 1753/4] to September 19th, 1760".² Where there is more than one payment, the sum total is given of the various entries referring to the constituency.

	£
Mr. Dodd for Reading ¹	1000
Mr. Talbot for Ilchester ²	1000
Mr. Bayntun Rolt for Chippenham ³	800
Sir William Yonge for Honiton ⁴	500
Mr. Cleveland for Barnstaple ⁵	1000
Mr. Thomas Leslie for Forfar Burghs ⁶	800
Mr. Trist for Totnes ⁷	200
Lord Macclesfield for Oxfordshire ⁸	3000
Mr. Hitch Young for Steyning ⁹	1000
Mr. Whitworth for Minehead ¹⁰	1000
Mr. Martin for Camelford ¹¹	740
Mr. Sewell for Wallingford	780
Lord Archer for Bramber ¹²	1000
Lord Falmouth ¹³	1455
Lord Edgcumbe and Mr. Andrews ¹⁴	700
The Duke of Argyle for Scotland	1000
Sir Jacob Downing for Dunwich ¹⁵	500
Lord Ilchester for Shaftesbury ¹⁶	330
Mr. Philipson for Mr. Bristowe for Shoreham	1000
Alderman Porter for Evesham ¹⁷	1000
Mr. Jenison ¹⁸	700
Mr. Charlton for Newark ¹⁹	1000
Col. Cornwallis and Sir John Crosse for Westminster ²⁰	1800

£22,305

(For Footnotes 1 to 20 see following pages.)

¹ Add. MSS. 32853, f. 460.

² Add. MSS. 32999, ff. 34-35.

Adding the £4250 mentioned by James West and in the papers of March 1754 as having been paid out to Amyand,

¹ I include in this £100 paid to Dodd in January 1755, presumably for expenditure connected with his election petition.

² Ilchester was an expensive constituency managed by a local man, who was a merchant in London, Thomas Lockyer, M.P. for Ilchester, 1747-61. "It was the genius, the ruling passion, of Thomas Lockyer, to make the utmost of whatever money came to his hands—so well known in the country, for heaping up and accumulating, as to acquire the name of *Snowball*—justly representing his character, and, it is presumed, his fate"; see *The Case of Maria Perry* (1789).

John Talbot (1712-56), third son of Charles, 1st Lord Talbot, sat. for Brecon, 1734-54, and for Ilchester from 1754 till his death in 1756. The following note with regard to him appears in the paper of March 15, 1754 (Add. MSS. 32995, f. 67): "Mr. Legge has acquainted the D. of N., that, as Mr. Talbot cannot come in where [he] is now chosen, he is desirous to represent some other borough." From Roberts's notes of March 20, it appears that Talbot was expected to contribute another £1000 of his own to the purchase of the seat (*ibid.* f. 105).

³ In the paper of March 21 (*ibid.* f. 114): "Mr. Bayntun Rolt, Chippenham, says that the expence of the election will amount to 1500—that Ald^r Fludyer pays as much—that he Bayntun was offered 800£ [marginal remarks by Newcastle: "to receive the King's order upon it" "800 granted"] and afterwards that there should be no difference—appeals to his conduct in his office for saving the King money" ["Surveyor-General of the Dutchy of Cornwall"]. . . ."

Chippenham was a borough rendered expensive by the competition of rich clothiers. Edward Bayntun Rolt (1710-1800), of Spy Park in the neighbourhood, was a squire, apparently of small means. He sat for Chippenham, 1737-80, and originally belonged to the Opposition—it was over his election petition that Walpole was defeated in 1742; but in 1747, Bayntun Rolt received £800 from the Government towards his election expenses (see *ibid.* f. 120), and in 1751 was appointed Surveyor-General of the Duchy of Cornwall. On the accession of George III he was one of the first to detach himself from Newcastle.

⁴ Sir William Yonge, 4th Baronet, had sat for Honiton, 1714-54, but in 1754 moved to Tiverton. He was succeeded by his son George, for whose election this money was paid; possibly Sir William Yonge, feeling that his death was near—he died in 1755—preferred in 1754 to have himself chosen for a cheaper constituency. About George Yonge and Honiton, see p. 202.

Dodd, Tracy, and Sewell, previous to Henry Pelham's death, a total expenditure of only £26,555 is obtained for

⁵ This money was paid for the use of George Amyand but appears against the name of John Cleveland, Secretary to the Admiralty, who, having personal connexions with Barnstaple, acted there for the Government. His son, John Cleveland junior, sat for Barnstaple, 1766-1802. George Amyand (1720-66) was a London merchant-banker and a Director of the East India Company, and is said to have left at his death a fortune of "clear 160,000*l.* stg. and perhaps more" (see *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, Tenth Report, Part I. p. 401). He surely did not require financial help—but why not take it, if obtainable? For the accounts of the Barnstaple election of 1754 see Add. MSS. 32995, ff. 106-7.

⁶ This total is made up of £300 given to him on April 1, 1754, and a further £500 added on April 15, 1756, in reply to his pathetic appeal to Newcastle: ". . . if your Grace don't do for me, I shall be undone. . . . my creditors wont have no longer patience with me . . ." (March 30, Add. MSS. 32864, f. 97; he wrote another letter of the same character on April 8, 1756, *ibid.* f. 182).

⁷ See accounts under April 2, 1754; also Add. MSS. 32995, f. 180.

⁸ This includes the £1000 paid through the Duke of Marlborough in July 1754. For the Oxfordshire election of 1754 see Dickins and Stanton, *An Eighteenth-Century Correspondence*; W. Wing, *The Great Oxfordshire Election, 1754*; and James Townsend, *The Oxfordshire Dashwoods*.

⁹ Died in 1759. He was a Groom of the Bedchamber.

¹⁰ About Whitworth see pp. 508-15.

¹¹ This includes £570 paid to him on December 6, 1754, in response to the undated paper, Add. MSS. 32737, f. 237. About Camelford see pp. 416-18. Originally only the "incidental expences of £170" were to have been "defrayed by the Government"; see J. Roberts's paper of March 15, 1754 (Add. MSS. 32995, f. 63), and payment made on April 5, 1754, p. 520.

¹² This seat was bought from Lord Archer for Lord Malpas (about him see p. 533, footnote (1)), to make him desist from opposing Lord Milton at Dorchester; see Add. MSS. 32734, ff. 19, 69, 361-3; Add. MSS. 32735, ff. 34 and 52-6. Lord Archer wrote to John Roberts on April 8, 1754, that his agent was going down to Steyning and Bramber and that he "has always carried the cash with him, which he proposes to do now, having a guard come up from those two places to escort him. I therefore desire the £1500 which must be in cash, may be paid this evening or early to-morrow morning . . ." (Add. MSS. 32734, f. 64.)

the general election of 1754. It was specially mentioned at the end of Roberts's paper of March 15, 1754, that he

¹³ Payment made for John Fuller at Tregony; see Add. MSS. 32995, ff. 64, 70, 188, 199.

¹⁴ This was for Grampound; see p. 429. In a paper dated April 9, 1754 (*ibid.* f. 205) the sum of £2000 is named as paid out to Lord Edgumhe for Cornish elections; but part of this was returned by the candidates.

¹⁵ In Roberts's paper of March 15, 1754 (*ibid.* f. 67): "Dunwich . . . Sir Jacob Downing [to be one Member] and offers the other Member to the D. of N. for £1000." The seat was bought for Soame Jenyns, a friend of Lord Hardwicke's family, on his being shifted from Cambridgeshire in order to accommodate both Lord Royston and Lord Granby in the county.

¹⁶ On behalf of Sir Thomas Clavering; see p. 246, and also Add. MSS. 32995, f. 126.

¹⁷ This payment was made on May 8, 1754; at the end of March, Porter was prepared for a compromise with his opponents, who offered to buy him off with £1200—he claimed by then to have spent £1750; he left the matter to Newcastle to decide, and it was stated afterwards that the compromise was broken off by the Duke's command; see Add. MSS. 32734, f. 305, 32735, f. 201, and 32995, f. 104. See, however, paper of March 21, 1754 (Add. MSS. 32995, f. 114)—it appears that Porter stood on James West's interest, and the remark is added: "Mr. Ald^r Porter desires not to give up"; see also ff. 195 and 203.

¹⁸ This is the only entry in the list about which I feel doubtful—there is no positive evidence of its having been made for election purposes. But Ralph Jenison, M.P. for Northumberland, 1723-41, and for Newport (Isle of Wight), 1749-58, did not hold a private pension in 1754, whilst any extra-payments, which he received as Master of the Buckhounds, appear in the ordinary Civil List accounts. Moreover, his letter to Henry Pelham, dated February 18, 1754, in which he asks what to do about certain demands from Newport, seems to suggest that this payment was for his election; see pp. 160-1.

¹⁹ Job Staunton Charlton was Newcastle's estate agent in Nottinghamshire, and in this election Newcastle was really financing his own borough interest. The opponent was a merchant, Thomas Delaval, a brother to John Hussey Delaval, subsequently 1st Lord Delaval, and Sir Francis Blake Delaval; he was no Tory, merely an intruder, and was supported by Dr. Wilson, a Newark clergyman, who at other times worked for Newcastle but who had a personal quarrel with Charlton.

and Lord Dupplin were to peruse Pelham's letters relating to elections "and extract from them whatever can be found therein".¹ With the help of such information further lists were compiled, and it seems hardly probable that any considerable sums paid out by Henry Pelham for the general election remained unknown to them or would not, in the further course of the election business, have been brought to the notice of Newcastle; nor does the sum of £35,000 for secret service in 1753 suggest any marked expenditure during that year on the forthcoming general election. If, therefore, we bring the £26,555 up to £30,000, we are not likely to under-estimate the total. But what was £30,000? The Tories alone are known to have spent on the Oxfordshire election of 1754, £20,068:1:2,² and the Whigs probably not less;³ the sums employed in one single constituency thus exceeded the total of the

About this election see Add. MSS. 32733, ff. 204, 206, 253, 569, 598, and 621; Add. MSS. 32734, ff. 102, 104, 109, 111, 371-5, and 389-91; Add. MSS. 32735, ff. 42, 470, and 575. On March 27, 1754, Charlton sent Newcastle a paper (Add. MSS. 32734, f. 375) showing that there were 537 good votes at Newark, that he and his fellow-candidate, John Manners, had 307 certain votes each, and each had already spent about £650, and "if no money be given", the further expense for each would amount to another £350.

"If money be given, will be added to the above expence to preserve our majority—it £5 per man to 120, half £300

if £10 per man be given, then 150 is supposed must be purchased, the one half is £750."

Charlton and Manners won the election, and on June 15, 1754, Charlton reported to Newcastle that the "election charges . . . daily increase by fresh demands, they are come up to almost 1700" (Add. MSS. 32735, f. 470). See also Lord Dupplin's paper about Newark, Add. MSS. 32995, f. 128.

²⁰ For a detailed account of the expenditure on this election, amounting to a total of £2281:1:6, see Add. MSS. 32995, ff. 174-5; £500 was borne by Sir John Crosse. The heaviest items were "tavern bills".

¹ *Ibid.* f. 67.

² See James Townsend, *The Oxfordshire Dashwoods* (1922), p. 28.

³ See, e.g., paper of March 25, 1754 (Add. MSS. 32995, ff. 126-36).

Government expenditure in the whole of Great Britain. To give another example of expensive elections—at Bristol, according to Dean Tucker, £60,000 were spent on the two contests of 1754 and 1755.¹

Barring the lump payment of £1000 to the Duke of Argyle for Scotland, the above-stated expenditure of secret service money at the general election of 1754 was made on behalf of 24 candidates; and of the money so spent, almost one-third was practically of no avail. The Whig candidates were defeated in Oxfordshire and were only seated on petition by a party vote in the House of Commons; John Dodd lost his election at Reading by one vote; Tracy was given up and lost his seat at Worcester; and the Government candidates were defeated at Wallingford by Richard Neville Aldworth, a Bedford Whig, and John Hervey, a Welsh judge.²

¹ See his letter to Lord Hardwicke, January 3, 1761; Add. MSS. 35596, f. 207. Other evidence seems to confirm this statement; thus, the Duke of Newcastle wrote to the King on April 6, 1754, that Mr. Nugent and Mr. Hanbury, "the great Quaker", had informed him of an express "from the Whigs at Bristol, who had directed Mr. Hanbury to engage to indemnify Mr. Nugent against all expences of his election . . . to the sum of £10,000 . . ."; "one single man, a considerable Quaker in Bristol, has subscribed £500" (Add. MSS. 32735, ff. 48-9).

² The case of Hervey supplies a curious illustration of the politics of that time. Hervey was a favourite of Lord Hardwicke, and wrote to him on January 10, 1754:

. . . I declared to Mr. Aldworth that in case I was returned for Wallingford I should vote in Parliament on the side of the Administration. . . . Indeed . . . it would have prejudiced my interest, if I had publicly declared my attachment to the Ministry, but it was so understood, which made some not so zealous in my interest as otherwise they would have been (Add. MSS. 35592, ff. 6-7).

And again on January 20:

This morning I saw Mr. Pelham. We talked over the affair of Wallingford and I made him all the assurances I could, and sincerely, of my steady attachment to the Administration. He said he was

In short, the ideas about the importance of secret service money in elections, certainly in so far as the general election of 1754 was concerned, are greatly exaggerated. George II loved "always . . . to have as great majorities as possible" in Parliament,¹ and Newcastle's anxious nature never allowed him to feel even comparatively safe, unless he paid everybody and for everything. In reality, by 1754 there was no real opposition left, the number of "Whigs" was growing continually, and the difficulty of Administration was merely "to find pasture enough for the beasts that they must feed".² Had all the elections financed from secret service funds gone in favour of full-fledged Tories (in reality there were not ten Tories among the "opposition" candidates), and had there been 24 more of them in a House in which, on Newcastle's own findings, the Government majority was 213,³ some places or pensions might have been saved, but the Government would have suffered no harm.

The fact deserves attention that practically none of the regular Government boroughs appears in the list of special disbursements made at the general election—they had to be nursed year by year and mainly by other means than secret service money. Neither Harwich nor Orford

perswaded it was so, but that I was so unhappily linked he must oppose me. At parting he called to me in this manner, Hearken, Hervey, we'll fight it out in the country, and be good friends in town (Add. MSS. 35592, f. 23).

The election was fought out "in the country", and Hervey was one of the "opponents" whom secret service money did not succeed in keeping out of the House.—For some of the reasons of the Government defeat at Wallingford, see letter from Robert Nedham to Mrs. Hucks, January 9, 1755 (Add. MSS. 32852, f. 128).

¹ See letter from the Duke of Newcastle to the Duke of Devonshire, January 17, 1756; Add. MSS. 32862, f. 122.

² Lord Chesterfield to S. Dayrolles, November 16, 1753.

³ See his "Memds. for the King", May 20, 1754; Add. MSS. 32735, f. 298.

is mentioned, nor Queensborough, nor any of the Admiralty boroughs or of the Cinque Ports ; nor of the numerous west country boroughs in which the Government arranged the purchase of seats for its supporters, cash being provided by the candidates, and patronage and favours by the Government ; nor of the still more numerous boroughs in which the interest of patrons and candidates required the countenance of Administration, giving it therefore an influence in the choice of representatives. The price of this system of indirect subsidies was enormous, but incalculable, for it is obviously impossible to estimate how much of the salary paid to a placeman represented remuneration for work done, and how much of it was a political sinecure ; or how much the public interest suffered by men being preferred for political reasons, where personal qualifications and merit should have decided.

To this indirect expenditure the annual payments made from secret service funds in some boroughs under Government management, or under patrons favoured by the Government, formed only an insignificant addition : there was a yearly bounty of £100 at Harwich ; at Orford £200 for the rent of houses to provide the necessary qualification for out-voters in the interest of the Government, and £100 for other expenses ; £200 a year were spent on Okehampton and £70 a year were paid to Mr. Manly, the manager at Taunton ; £120 a year were paid for two years by Cleveland to an unnamed clergyman in connexion with an election, apparently at Saltash ; £100 were paid by Gashry to Lady Trelawny ;¹ £550 a year were given for

¹ The character of this payment is not quite clear. In a memorandum of April 26, 1755 (Add. MSS. 32996, f. 91), the entry appears : " Mr. Gashry. Cornish borough. Sir John Trelawney, £200." No such payment was made at the time, and Sir John Trelawny died in 1756 (about him see p. 399). In November 1756, just before Newcastle resigned, the entry occurs : " Mr. Gashry has advanced Lady Trelawney £100 " (Add. MSS. 32997, f. 68 ; also ff. 70 and 74), and the money was repaid to him on November 6, 1756. I suppose

Cambridge, through Lord Montfort, Lord Dupplin, or C. S. Cadogan¹—presumably because Newcastle, as Chancellor of Cambridge University, took a peculiar interest even in the town. Beginning with July 1756, a subsidy of £600 a year was paid to Thomas Holmes for nursing five seats in three Isle of Wight boroughs (Newport, Newton, Yarmouth). Thomas Pitt, the elder prodigal brother of William Pitt, had a regular pension of £1000 p.a., for having ceded to the Government the patronage of two seats at Old Sarum and one at Okehampton, and whatever interest he possessed at Grampound, but as his pension was on the Irish Establishment, it does not enter into these accounts. From 1757 onwards, £100 were paid to Mr. Fane in support of his family interest at Lyme Regis, and were much appreciated by him—he wrote to Newcastle on May 29, 1762, three days after the Duke had resigned the Treasury :

Mr. Henry Fane presents his most respectful compliments to His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, with many thanks for the 75*l.* for his freinds at Lyme. As he is not well versed in the political system of this country, he cannot tell what to say on the late changes he hears of amongst the Great; but wishes his Lyme friends may meet with so good a paymaster as his Grace has been to them.²

The total of disbursements made on elections and the nursing of boroughs from secret service funds during Newcastle's first term at the Treasury, March 1754 to November 1756, was as follows :

the payment was connected with the Trelawny interest at Looe, and I therefore include it here.

¹ Thomas, 2nd Lord Montfort, sat for Cambridge 1754-55, when he succeeded to the peerage, Lord Dupplin from 1741 till he succeeded his father as Lord Kinnoull in 1758, and C. S. Cadogan, 1749-54 and 1755-76.

² Add. MSS. 32939, f. 93. The £75 covered three quarters till Lady Day.

On the general election of 1754 ¹	.	.	£22,305	0	0
On seven by-elections ²	.	.	8,901	11	0
On the nursing of constituencies ³	.	.	5,010	0	0
			<hr/>		
			£36,216	11	0

¹ The payments made in the lifetime of Henry Pelham are not included.

² £2000 were spent on the by-election at Bristol in February 1756, which the Whig lost by 71 votes on a poll of almost 5000. £4675 were spent at Taunton, where Robert Webb, a local man who had sat for it 1747-54, withdrew, foreseeing that the expense would amount to £5000, and the leading Dissenters turned to Newcastle for a candidate "most agreeable to His Majesty and likily readily to go thro' with the necessary expence" (Add. MSS. 32736, f. 25). £173 were spent on Radnorshire (see pp. 315-16), £500 on Dodd's election at Reading, £100 were actually spent at Old Sarum, and £1000 had to be reimbursed on this occasion to Sir William Irby under a complicated arrangement, £313 : 11s. at Hindon ("If no help is to be had in a venal borough, venal boroughs must go to your enemies", wrote Henry Fox, at that time Secretary of State, to Newcastle on January 11, 1756; see Add. MSS. 32862, ff. 79-80, and also ff. 61-3 and ff. 81-2), and £140 at Totnes.

³ Harwich, £300; Orford, £800; Isle of Wight boroughs, £600; Cambridge Town, £1650; Okehampton, £380; Mr. Manly of Taunton, £140; Mr. Bryer of Weymouth, £200; Cleveland's clergyman, £240; Lady Trelawny, £100; Thomas Rivett, £600. The case of Manly is quite clear—he acted as Newcastle's election agent at Taunton. Less clear is that of Bryer of Weymouth. Various Members had friends for whom they managed to obtain pensions from the secret service funds, but this does not constitute evidence of their having been election agents for their patrons (thus, *e.g.*, there is nothing to show that Mr. Cooke, "Mr. Gybbon's friend", either lived at Rye or ever acted for him). Similarly, there are a number of local people in receipt of secret service pensions about which I have no evidence that they were given with a view to cultivating the Parliamentary interest (Mr. Till of Chichester, Dr. Thorpe of Hastings, Dr. Hepburn of Lynn, etc.). But where a man obtained a secret service pension through a Member representing the borough in which he was resident, the presumption is that it was for election services. Bryer's pension was obtained for him through Welbore Ellis, Member for Weymouth (similarly, after 1757, the pension of Mr. Ramy of Yarmouth was obtained for him by the "Spanish" Charles Townshend, Member for the borough). Both these are included in expenditure on nursing constituencies, though

A total of £115,365 : 1s. of secret service money was spent through John Roberts during the two and a half years March 1754 to November 1756 ; although this period includes the best part of a general election, only something over 30 per cent of the money was used for elections and the nursing of boroughs.

The expenditure on by-elections, the nursing of boroughs etc., during the time from Newcastle's return to the Treasury in July 1757, to the death of George II on October 25, 1760, was naturally even less ; adding the arrears paid off under George III, it amounted to £14,747 : 10s. out of a total of about £127,000 spent for this period. There were the payments to boroughs under regular Government management (Harwich, Orford, Cambridge, and Okehampton) and subsidies for the management of the Isle of Wight boroughs, of Lyme, Taunton, Derby, Yarmouth, Retford, Weymouth and Rye, making a total of £9847 : 10s. Mr. Duckett¹ was paid £1500 (a pension of £500 p.a.) for vacating his seat at Calne when Pitt required one for Dr. Hay. Thomas Pitt extorted £1000 from the Treasury over Lord Pulteney's re-election at Old Sarum, in December 1759,² £300 were spent in law charges at Rye, £300 on a by-election at Camelford,³ £500 were given to Colonel Leslie for Perth Burghs, and £300 to Mr. Baikie for the Orkneys with a view to the approaching general election of 1761. Lastly, £500 were paid on July 25, 1760, " to the

there is no positive evidence such as is available in the case of Mr Davis of Rye and Mr. White's friend at Retford (see footnote on p. 554, August-September, 1759). Lastly, there is Thomas Rivett, the Duke of Devonshire's " chief friend and manager " at Derby, who, at a by-election in 1748, had himself returned for the town against the Duke's candidate, but stood down in 1754, and received a pension of £300 p.a., which by November 1756 accounted for £600.

¹ See my article on " Thomas Duckett and Daniel Bull, Members for Calne ", in the *Wiltshire Archaeol. Magazine*, vol. xlv., June 1928.

² See Add. MSS. 32899, ff. 19, 53, and 325-6.

³ See p. 422.

Earl of Lincoln, as High Steward of Westminster, for the expences of the Deputy Steward and Court of Burgesses in order to secure the election without any further expence", and another £500 on January 12, 1762, to cover his expenses up to Christmas 1760¹ (besides £625 on May 25, 1762, to cover them up to Lady Day of that year).

Deducting the seven and a half months of the Devonshire-Pitt Administration in 1756-57, from the death of Henry Pelham to that of George II, Newcastle was nearly six years at the head of the Treasury. During that period in round figures, £243,000 were spent in "secret service" from his office, and £51,000 of it, *i.e.* slightly more than one-fifth, were used for elections and expenditure directly connected with them.

A month after the accession of George III the new Court, to advertise its virtue, announced that none of the "King's money" would be employed in the forthcoming general election; the Duke of Newcastle broke out into his usual language of lamentation; a few writers of letters and memoirs made malicious remarks on the subject; and materials are available for an historical legend. To give but one typical example—Mr. Hunt writes in his *History of England, 1760-1801*:²

The court spread the idea that it was for purity of election; it was known that Newcastle's hands were tied, and it was expected that no money would be issued from the treasury. Nothing was less true. Corruption was rampant and the treasury issued large sums.

Neither statement is correct. It was Newcastle who managed the general election of 1761, and, barring a few payments made in advance in the lifetime of George II, no money for it was issued from the Treasury; none was available for secret service between October 25, 1760, and

¹ This payment, though part of the arrears, is entered in the "new book".

² P. 19.

March 19, 1761—at least there is no entry in the Civil List accounts which could cover payments of that character, nor any disbursements in Newcastle's books; nor, after the secret service fund had been set to work once more, are there any entries, other than those connected with the regular nursing of certain constituencies, which might bear retrospectively on that general election. As for those who glibly assert that Lord Bute "secretly made full use of the coffers" of the Treasury,¹ they had better explain how he managed it, through whom, and on what warrant.

But in reality, the money expended by the Government in general elections constituted only a small addition to official patronage, and to the vast sums spent openly year after year on voters and Members, through offices, sinecures, and contracts, which were employed for advancing the Parliamentary "interest". This, of course, every one knew at the time; "those powers of office and influence arising from thence", wrote Newcastle to Hardwicke on December 7, 1760, "which my good friend Mr. Pitt says will be sufficient to carry a Parliament with some perhaps *immaterial* alterations, without giving one farthing of the King's money".² And John Douglas, D.D. (subsequently Bishop of Salisbury), the political scribe of Lord Bath, thus argued the matter in his *Seasonable Hints from an Honest Man on the present important crisis of a new Reign and a new Parliament*:

I am very sensible, that there are many well-meaning persons who seem to think, that without corruption, there might be danger apprehended from democratical encroachments on prerogative.—But . . . when we consider, in how many boroughs the Government has the voters at its command; when we consider the vast body of persons employed in the collection of the revenue in every part of the kingdom; the inconceivable number of placemen, and candidates for places in the customs, in the excise, in the post

¹ See, e.g., the Earl of Ilchester, *Henry Fox, First Lord Holland*, vol. ii. p. 129.

² Add. MSS. 32915, f. 334. •

office, in the dock yards, in the ordnance, in the salt office, in the stamps, in the navy and victualing offices, and in a variety of other departments; when we consider again the extensive influence of the money corporations, subscription jobbers, and contractors; the endless dependence created by the obligations conferred on the bulk of the gentlemen's families throughout the kingdom, who have relatives preferred, or waiting to be preferred, in our navy, and numerous standing army; when, I say, we consider how wide, how binding a dependence on the crown is created by the above enumerated particulars, no lover of monarchy need fear any bad consequences from shutting up the Exchequer at elections; especially when to the endless means the crown has of influencing the votes of the electors, we add the vast number of employments, which the fashion of the times makes the elected desirous of, and for the obtaining which, they must depend upon the crown.¹

Newcastle at times suspected in the refusal of secret service money a wish on the part of Pitt for a radical Parliament—"as like the Common Council of London as possible"—and a scheme of Bute's to swamp it with Tories, as had been done in 1710; but even he, in calmer moments, put the matter on much narrower ground. In his "Heads for my Conference with my Lord Bute", dated December 14, 1760, he wrote:

The expence of several places I know already will be so very great, that it will be difficult to find private persons, able to be at it; and therefore we shall not have great choice.²

And again in a letter to Lord Mansfield, dated December 26:

*The thing that embarrasses me most is the choice of the Parliament. The expence is become very great (in many places 3000£ is the price or near it) that it will be very difficult to get private persons to support it; and yet that must be done. But it will fling the boroughs into East Indians, West Indians, citizens and brokers, who are not very reputable, and yet very troublesome Members.*³

¹ Pp. 37-8.

² Add. MSS. 32916, f. 56.

³ *Ibid.* ff. 337-8.—Later on, George III showed a similar dislike for these types of Members; in a letter of August 24, 1774, he gave

In other words, secret service money was required to enable some country gentlemen to fight elections in expensive boroughs; otherwise, the Government had to adopt candidates with longer purses of their own.

What was the result? Of the 24 candidates subsidised in 1754, eight were re-elected for the same constituencies, without financial help,¹ four were transferred by arrangement to other constituencies,² four were dead,³ four did not stand for Parliament again;⁴ Thomas Leslie (who had received £500 before George II's death) was defeated; Sir Thomas Clavering, by his own choice, changed his constituency, but lost his seat;⁵ Sewell who, in 1754, had been defeated at Wallingford, now met with the same fate at Exeter; and possibly Sir George Yonge at Honiton did not stand because of the threatened expense—though even this is doubtful. There was neither an inrush of East Indians or West Indians, of citizens or brokers. In fact, the only West Indian who came in for any of these seats in 1761 was Sir John Gibbons at Wallingford, where the Government money had availed nothing in 1754. And the number of merchants in these seats diminished by one.⁶ Nor, as is shown in the essay on "The General Election of 1761", was any such change noticeable in

it as a reason in favour of an early dissolution of Parliament, that "it will fill the House with more gentlemen of landed property, as the nabobs, planters, and other volunteers are not ready for the battle" (see Donne, *Correspondence of George III with Lord North*, vol. i. p. 201).

¹ Dodd, Bayntun-Rolt, Amyand, Trist, S. Martin, Fanshawe, M. Burrell, and E. Cornwallis.

² Lord Parker, Whitworth, Lord Malpas, and Jenyns.

³ Talbot, H. Young, Porter, and Jenison.

⁴ John Fuller, R. Bristowe, Charlton, and Sir John Crosse.

⁵ Sir Thomas Clavering resigned his seat at Shaftesbury in December 1760, to contest Co. Durham, but was defeated both in 1760 and 1761.

⁶ The place of Robert Bristowe at Shoreham was taken by Lord Middleton and of Alderman Porter at Evesham by John Rushout, jun.; but at Steyning a merchant took the place of Hitch Young.

the general complexion of the House of Commons. William Pitt and John Douglas were right. The means for influencing elections were sufficient without the use of secret service money. And whatever cause Newcastle had for lamentation, he raised it on a wrong occasion—as was his habit.

When payments from secret service funds were resumed in March 1761, the usual expenditure on the nursing of constituencies was continued and payments were made as from October 1760; the sum thus spent up to Newcastle's resignation on May 26, 1762, amounted to, £4592 : 10s.¹ in a total of £48,981 : 9 : 2 $\frac{3}{4}$. Rounding off the figures, Newcastle, as First Lord of the Treasury, spent £291,000 on secret service, and £55,500 of it went for constituencies and elections.

PENSIONS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Cognate to expenditure on constituencies and elections was that on pensions to Members of Parliament. These were nothing more than a small supplement to the eighteenth-century type of "payment of Members", and that system itself, in the absence of organised parties, bore a character very different from that given to it when it is judged in the light of ideas perfectly alien to the age.

According to eighteenth-century theory, the executive, which had to carry on the business of the nation, consisted of the King and his Ministers; and the task of the legislature was to advise the King and to control his "servants". The proper attitude for right-minded Members was one of considered support to the Government in the due performance of its task. What other grounds could there be for a systematic, "formed opposition" than dis-

¹ Isle of Wight £900, Cambridge £825, Okehampton £300, Orford £350, Harwich £150, the Orkneys £300, Lyme £125, Taunton £105, Westminster £625, Retford £62 : 10s., Yarmouth £300, Derby £450.

loyalty to the established order (*e.g.* Jacobitism) or a selfish, factious conspiracy of politicians to force their way into offices higher than they could obtain by loyal co-operation with their Sovereign and his Ministers? But if it was proper for the well-affected Member to co-operate with the Government, so long as his conscience did not force him to give a contrary vote, attendance on the business of the nation was work worthy of its hire, and the unavoidable expenditure in securing a seat deserved sympathetic consideration. "I have ever apprehended it to be reasonable", wrote in 1757 a Whig who after seventeen years in Parliament held neither place nor pension, "that those who dedicate their time and fortune to the service of the Government should be entitled to a share of the rewards that are in its disposal. . . ." ¹ Nor did such a "share" necessarily deprive them of their independence—it is well known that about 1750 even Cabinet Ministers could speak and vote against Government measures; the one and only thing which place or office precluded was what was anyhow considered reprehensible, a "formed opposition". Even in 1764, after the heat of Parliamentary contests had risen very high, George Grenville still argued, in the case of H. S. Conway, that he meant to leave every Member, whether in civil or military employment, free to vote according to his conscience, and that it was only at a systematic opposition that he drew the line. At the present day a Member may accept from his party organisation payment of expenses incurred in his constituency; when faced by financial disaster, some have applied, not unsuccessfully, to their Whips; but a Member must not change sides from patently interested motives; and he must, as a rule, vote with his party—discordant votes at the behest of a tender conscience have to be extremely rare or otherwise prove him unfit to be a party Member, which is practically the only type now in existence. The party

¹ J. Garth to Newcastle, Sept. 10, 1757; Add. MSS. 32873, f. 558.

intervenes between the individual Member and the State, and also between the Member and his constituency; it has created new loyalties, a new morality, and a new type of mental and moral dishonesty.

"Every set of men are honest" was, according to Shelburne, the doctrine of Henry Fox; "it's only necessary to define their sense of it to know where to look for it. . . ." This is even more true of various generations; each age opens to men certain permissible ways for pursuing their own interest in politics, and provided they keep within these limits they are deemed "honest". To quote Henry Fox again—this time his own letter to Shelburne (December 29, 1761):

A man who follows his own interest, if he makes no undue sacrifices, either private or public, to the worship of it, is not dishonest or even dirty. I wish your Lordship . . . would not be so free of thinking or calling them such. Whoever goes on with what I have left off—ambition—must wish for such supporters, and it would be an additional curse of that cursed trade to have a constant bad opinion of one's most useful friends and most assiduous attendants.¹

The peculiarity of our own time is that the individual Member can best pursue his interest by strictly adhering to his party, and that this is the only way in which he is entitled to pursue it. But about 1750 there were no parties in our sense of the term, certainly no party organizations, and His Majesty's Government and the State as such were in theory the party which embraced all well-affected Members. To adhere to them in spite of changes of Ministers did not necessarily mean changing sides, and to accept rewards from them was not necessarily synonymous with being bribed. Considering the matter from the other end, eighteenth-century Administrations, not being able to control individual Members through a party

¹ Lord Fitzmaurice, *The Life of William, Earl of Shelburne*, vol. i. p. 101.

machine and a party-trained electorate, had to bind their following by posts of honour, places of profit, contracts and pensions; in these, Ministers had to find the attracting and constraining force to satisfy the self-interest, to tame the exuberance, and restrain the consciences, of individual Members, which otherwise would have produced a condition of permanent instability and uncertainty. After a Parliamentary experience of almost forty years, Soame Jenyns, when writing on Parliamentary reform in 1784, declared that an independent Parliament consisting of Members "unawed and uninfluenced, and guided only by the dictates of their own judgment and conscience", never existed and never could exist.

Take away self-interest, and all these will have no star to steer by . . . ; a Minister . . . must be possessed of some attractive influence, to enable him to draw together these discordant particles, and unite them in a firm and solid majority, without which he can pursue no measures of public utility with steadiness or success. An independent House of Commons is no part of the English constitution. . . .¹

A numerous assembly uninfluenced is as much a creature of imagination, as a griffin or a dragon. . . . Parliaments have ever been influenced, and by that means our constitution has so long subsisted; but the end and nature of that influence is perpetually misrepresented and misunderstood. They are seldom, very seldom, bribed to injure their country, because it is seldom the interest of Ministers to injure it; but the great source of corruption is, that they will not serve it for nothing. Men get into Parliament in pursuit of power, honors, and preferments, and until they obtain them, determine to obstruct all business, and to distress Government; but happily for their country, they are no sooner gratified, than they are equally zealous to promote the one, and support the other.²

What was the approximate number of Members in the House of Commons thus rendered zealous by employments under the Government? It is very difficult to form an

¹ *Thoughts on a Parliamentary Reform* (1784), pp. 20-21.

² *Ibid.* pp. 22-4.

estimate, infinitely more so than appears to writers who hawk about a figure because it was once named by a contemporary. There is a list in the Newcastle Papers of "Employments in the House of Commons"¹ compiled when the Rockingham Government was about to be formed, and dated July 2, 1765. It contains 163 names, and the selection, which is not invariably convincing, illustrates the inherent difficulties of making it. The Governor of the Bank of England is named as if that had been an official post, but nothing is said about Government contractors; even the Speaker of the House of Commons appears in it, whilst others holding regular places of profit are forgotten. It was hard to remember everybody, and still harder to know where to draw the line; it would be difficult to say how to class those who had their places for life, and were therefore independent of the Government in power, but who often held another smaller place during pleasure; etc.² In short, the figure of 163 in 1765 should not be made into an Apocalyptic name for the Beast of Parliamentary corruption; it is given here merely as an approximate estimate whereby to measure the relative importance, or rather unimportance, of the secret service pensions in the House of Commons.

The number of Members in receipt of these was between 1754 and 1760 fourteen or fifteen,³ and at the time

¹ Add. MSS. 32967, ff. 200-203.

² A computation which I have made for June 1761 yields a figure of about 170 as the total of "placemen"; this includes all Members holding civil appointments of any description—in the Government or Civil Service, the Diplomatic Service or Judiciary, posts at Court or in the household of other members of the Royal family, or mere sinecures; further, colonels of regiments, governors of castles, etc. It does not include the Speaker, the Governor of the Bank, Lord Lieutenants of counties, or officers in the Army and Navy holding nothing besides their commands; nor does it include contractors.

³ The "List of Members of Parliament who received private pensions with the arrears due to Michaelmas last, 1760" (Add. MSS.

of Newcastle's resignation, in May 1762, there were sixteen.¹ The total number of sitting Members of the House who received pensions or gratuities from secret service funds at any time whilst Newcastle acted under George II was twenty-nine, and the total paid to them (including arrears) was £49,550. When payments were resumed in March 1761 the pensions were continued as from October 1760, and a total of twenty-one Members of Parliament received pensions from Newcastle under George III. All but five were men whose names had appeared in the secret service books under George II, and of the other five, three, if not four, were given their pensions at Newcastle's recommendation.² The sum received by them for the

33040, f. 23), contains eighteen names; but it includes Lord Holmes because of the payment of £600 p.a. "for the Isle of Wight", which cannot be treated as a private pension and is in this essay included in expenditure on constituencies; and the Chairman of Committees, whose pension of £500 p.a. is here counted among salaries; lastly, there is the name of Jeffreys with a justified query against it—so far he had no regular pension and had merely received a gratuity of £500 in 1758.

¹ In the "General List of Persons who receive Additional Salaries and Pensions privately", dated May 18, 1762 (Add. MSS. 33040, ff. 358-60), the Members of Parliament are grouped together, and eighteen names are given. The payment to Lord Holmes is no longer placed among pensions to Members, but the Chairman of Committees appears among them; moreover, Lord Malpas is included, though there is no record of his having received any payment from secret service funds later than April 21, 1761, and Dougall Campbell, who had none under George III, not even the arrear of £200 due to him at Michaelmas 1760. This leaves only fifteen names, to which, however, that of Richard Bull must be added; he had been in receipt of a pension since November 1761.

² The one doubtful case is that of Richard Bull of Ongar, M.P., the friend and nominee of Humphrey Morice, M.P., who had been offered a pension by Newcastle in March 1761 but refused it both on its own merits and because of an alleged "disgrace" put on Morice by Newcastle. In October 1761 he was instructed by Morice to inform Newcastle that he had desired the King to nominate to a vacancy which

period October 1760 till May 1762 was £15,025, making a total of £64,575 for the 7½ years of Newcastle's term at the Treasury and an average of £8600 p.a. In fact, the pay roll of Members of Parliament as it stood in April 1756 (excluding the Chairman of Committees) was £6700 a year; in October 1760, £7900, and in May 1762, £9800,¹ sums much smaller than the current talk about secret service pensions and "bribes" would make one expect. If to these £64,575 another £4000 are added, representing pensions obtained by Members and continued to them after they had ceased to sit in Parliament,² we obtain a round total of £68,500.

On the opposite page are the names of all the men who were given by Newcastle pensions and gratuities from secret service funds whilst in the House of Commons, the rate at which they were paid, the period during which they drew their pensions, and the sum total received by them (for biographical notes about them see footnotes to the "Secret Service Accounts" at the end of Volume II.).

A more motley crowd than the thirty-five Members named in this list can hardly be imagined, and the variety in type is only equalled by the variety of reasons for which these pensions were given. Two general principles can, however, be laid down with regard to them: that as a rule they were given in lieu of places, and that there was more jobbery and charity about them than bribery.

was expected at his borough of Newport (Cornwall), and would not accept the directions of Newcastle (see *secret service accounts* under November 18, 1761). Considering, however, Newcastle's nature, one cannot feel certain that even then it was not he who suggested once more to the King that Bull should be given a pension.

¹ The marked increase was due to a pension of £2000 p.a. given by George III to James Stuart-Mackenzie, M.P., the brother of Lord Bute.

² This sum consists of £2100, paid to Sir Duncan Campbell, R. Neale, and J. Carnichael, after they had ceased to sit in Parliament in 1754, and £1900 paid to J. Mordaunt, J. Pelham, and R. Colebrooke, subsequent to 1761.

	Period during which Received. ³	Annual Pension.	Total Received.
		£	£
Thomas Medlicott . . .	1754-62	600	4700
George Mackay ⁴ . . .	1754-56	300	900
Colonel John Mordaunt ⁵ . . .	1754-61	800	5400
S. Jenyns ⁶ . . .	1754-55	600	1200
Sir C. Powlett ⁷ . . .	1754	1000	1000
Colonel James Pelham ⁸ . . .	1754-61	500	4125
Sir William Middleton, Bart. . .	1754-55	800	1600
Sir Francis Poole ⁹ . . .	1754-62	300	2475
Brereton Salusbury ¹⁰ . . .	1754-55	500	1000
G. Harrison . . .	1754-55	500	1000
Walter Carey ¹¹ . . .	1754-55	200	300
A. Acourt ¹² . . .	1754-62	500	4625
John Buller ¹³ . . .	1755-56	200	400
Dougall Campbell . . .	1755-60	400	2000
Thomas Fane ¹⁴ . . .	1755	200	200
Charles Whitworth . . .	1755-60	400	1900
James Vere ¹⁵ . . .	1756-59	400 (From 1758, £200)	1200
George Brudenell . . .	1756-62	500	3625
Robert Colville . . .	1756-58	300	600
Lord Malpas . . .	1756-60	600	3000
Robert Colebrooke ¹⁶ . . .	1756-61	600	3000
John Offley . . .	1758-62	400	2000
Thomas Watson . . .	1758-62	800	3400
Ralph Jenison ¹⁷ . . .	1758	1800	1350
John Dodd . . .	1758-62	500	2500
Robert Fairfax ¹⁸ . . .	1759-62	500	2000
Lord Parker . . .	1760-62	600	1650
A. T. Keck . . .	1760-62	600	1350
John Jeffreys ¹⁹ . . .	1761-62	500	1250
Richard Cavendish . . .	1761-62	800	800
Sir Thomas Hales . . .	1761-62	600	600
Henry Finch ²⁰ . . .	1761	900	225
Richard Bull . . .	1761-62	600	600
James Stuart Mackenzie . . .	1761-62	2000	2000
James Brudenell . . .	1761-62	600	600

(For Footnotes 5 to 20 see following pages.)

³ It must, however, be remembered that payments received between November 1756 and July 1757 are not included, and there is no certainty that all these pensions were continued during that break in Newcastle's tenure of office.

⁴ Appointed in 1756 Master of the Mint in Scotland.

Secret service pensions were on the whole unpopular with Members of Parliament, except with those in the worst financial distress, and were treated in most cases as a merely temporary arrangement pending something better. They presented neither the security nor the chances of advancement inherent in office, and certainly conferred no honour on their holders. When in 1757, on a rearrangement of offices necessitated by the Coalition, Ralph Jenison gave up the Mastership of the Buckhounds, which he had

⁵ He did not stand at the general election of 1761, but his pension was continued. He must not be confused with his cousin General Sir John Mordaunt, M.P., who commanded the expedition against the French coast in 1757.

⁶ Appointed in 1755 Commissioner for Trade and Plantations, which office he retained till 1780.

⁷ His father succeeded in 1754 to the dukedom of Bolton, and Lord Winchester, as he now was, was appointed Lieutenant of the Tower of London; on this appointment the pension was discontinued.

⁸ He did not stand again at the general election of 1761 and died the same year; £250 received by him for that last half-year, when he was no longer in Parliament, are not included in the sum.

⁹ An extra £200 was given him in November 1756.

¹⁰ He died on March 9, 1756.

¹¹ His name in the accounts appears merely as "Mr. Carey"; I suppose him to have been Walter Carey, M.P. for Helston, 1722-27, and for Dartmouth, 1727-57 (when he died), but there is no evidence to prove his identity except that the name does not occur after 1757; on the other hand, it does not occur any more even in 1756. In the list of "The Names . . . of all the Lords and Members of the House of Commons in the old Book from the 9th of July 1755 to the 7th of July 1756 inclusive . . ." (Add. MSS. 32997, f. 64) Carey's name is not mentioned; but then the last payment to him was on July 9, 1755 (see p. 531).

¹² He seems to have been so indifferent to the money that sometimes for two years he did not trouble to draw it.

¹³ John Buller was Government manager for the borough of East and West Looe in Cornwall, and this money was paid him to make up his salary as Comptroller of the Mint to £500 per annum, but the payment was not continued after 1756. See pp. 399-400.

, held for twenty years, and was offered as compensation a secret service pension of £1500, he replied by asking that £1000 of it be placed on the Irish Establishment, as secret service pensions depended upon the life of the King.¹ Also Medlycott begged in 1755 to be "settled upon the Irish Establishment".² Richard Bull, the friend and nominee of Humphrey Morice, M.P., instructed by him "to accept of nothing from the Duke, except what will give me an honourable reason for saying I am contented",

¹⁴ He was given the pension on his brother Francis relinquishing a Commissionership of the Board of Trade, in December 1755. He waived it in 1758. See accounts under November 2, 1756, and July 1, 1758.

¹⁵ Identification confirmed by Add. MSS. 32997, f. 237.

¹⁶ He was defeated at the general election of 1761, but the pension was continued to him till he was appointed Minister to the Swiss Cantons; during that time he received another £450, not included above.

¹⁷ He died before the year was out.

¹⁸ At first these payments were treated as "gratuities", but subsequently were converted into a pension. About him see pp. 502-8.

¹⁹ This includes a gratuity of £500 in 1758; about him see pp. 489-94.

²⁰ He died after one quarter only had been paid.

¹ Add. MSS. 32872, ff. 55-7.

² See p. 495. In view of these requests it might be supposed that pensions on the Irish Establishment were used extensively for bribing Members of the British Parliament. A "List of Pensioners on the Irish Establishment laid before the Irish House of Commons, pursuant to their order of November 3, 1769" was published in *The London Museum* in 1770 (pp. 17-27). It contains the names of four men only who at any time sat in the British Parliament; and all four were given their pensions for life, and for work done. A pension of £800 a year was given to John Roberts on June 3, 1754, i.e., after the death of Henry Pelham, whose private secretary he had been for twenty years (moreover at that time Roberts was not yet in Parliament); a pension of £2000 p.a. was given to Sir Thomas Robinson (subsequently Lord Grantham) in 1755, on his relinquishing the Secretaryship of State to Henry Fox; in 1758, £500 p.a. to J. S. Charlton, who had been for years Chairman of Committees in the House of Commons; and in March 1760, after the victory in Quiberon Bay, Admiral Sir Edward Hawke was given a pension of £2000 a year.

when offered a secret service pension by Newcastle, refused it: "Now, my Lord, your kind offer to me, being of an uncertain duration, and of rather too private a nature, I cannot consistent with my own and my friend's honor, accept it."¹ Charles Whitworth, who had for years solicited employment, when given a secret service pension of £400 p.a., did not desist from his endeavours to secure office, and Newcastle, when the Deputy-Governorship of Tilbury was secured for him, thought that he would accept a place of half the value of his pension as a sufficient equivalent.² John Buller silently dropped his pension in 1756, and merely used this fact subsequently to reinforce his claim to office. Thomas Fane, who was given a pension of £200 on his brother relinquishing a place at the Board of Trade, drew it once, and then gave it up for half the sum to be paid to his brother Henry as a subsidy for their family borough of Lyme Regis. At least eighteen out of the thirty-five pensions can be proved to have been given either as compensation for places relinquished (Salisbury, Jenison, Offley, Fane, Cavendish, and Finch), or to make up the value of a place to a certain sum (Pelham, Buller, Jeffreys, and Whitworth after 1758), or until their holders could be provided for in office (Mackay, Jenyns, Colebrooke, Keck, Hales, James Brudenell, Bull, Stuart-Mackenzie, and Whitworth until 1758).

Nor were most of the recipients of secret service pensions men who would otherwise have gone into opposition. Colonel Pelham and Sir Francis Poole were cousins of Newcastle's, returned by his influence, and their pensions were sheer family jobbery on his part; and when he

¹ Letter dated March 17, 1761, Add. MSS. 32920, f. 308; see p. 571, under November 18, 1761.

² See "State of Private Pensions", drawn up early in 1758 (Add. MSS. 33039, f. 77). To those under "Decrease" is added Whitworth's pension of £400, though with a query before his name.

resigned in November 1756, to them alone their pensions for the current year were paid before they were due. Whitworth was by marriage distantly connected with the Pelham family. Jeffreys, Offley, Dodd, and George Brudenell belonged to the intimate circle of Lord Lincoln, Newcastle's nephew and heir, and son-in-law to Henry Pelham. Soame Jenyns was a protégé of the Hardwicke family and Robert Colebrooke was a brother of James and George Colebrooke, both Members of Parliament, and big merchants bound by numerous interests and contracts to the Treasury and Newcastle. Keck was recommended both for Parliament and his pension by the Duke of Marlborough, and received it because "His Majesty was very glad of an opportunity to oblige your Grace",¹ but the Duke's attitude certainly was not determined by that pension; Richard Cavendish was given his pension because the Duke of Devonshire asked it as a favour to himself, and no one can suppose that without it the Cavendishes would have gone into opposition to Newcastle; nor was there any need for George III and Bute to bribe his brother, James Stuart-Mackenzie. Nor were Medlycott, Jeffreys, or Fairfax of the stuff of which oppositions are made.²

The charitable character of the secret service pensions is further shown by the fact that in many cases they were continued after their recipients had withdrawn from Parliament or had failed to secure re-election. In 1760 the death of the king, from whose "bounty" these pensions had been given, and the break in payments for almost half a year, would have offered a particularly good opportunity for stopping them to those who did not even stand for Parliament at the forthcoming general election. None the less, they were continued both to Colonel Mordaunt (whose pension was even raised by £400 p.a.) and James

¹ See p. 559.

² About them see essay on "Parliamentary Beggars", pp. 489-515.

Pelham, and also to Robert Colebrooke, who lost his seat. But while offices, places, and even pensions, when publicly avowed, had to bear some proportion to the rank, standing, and merit of their holders (for whatever was given in excess to any man was certain to be made into a precedent, a claim, or a grievance by all his equals), secret service pensions could be readjusted to needs. Two entries in Newcastle's "Memorandums for the King" about a pension for Sir Thomas Hales, Vice-Warden of the Cinque Ports and Clerk of the Green Cloth, well illustrate this principle.

March 11, 1761.

Sir Thomas Hales. Two sons and four daughters. Hopes to have £800 per ann. amongst them till some thing may fall to provide for some of them.¹

March 19, 1761.

Pension for Sir Thomas Hales's children.
£600 for his son.²

Even more clearly apparent than in the case of pensions to Members of Parliament, was their benevolent character of a bounty given by the King to men of rank in distress, with regard to pensions "in the Lords", which have to be analysed next.

THE ARISTOCRATIC DOLE

Here is a list of peers who received secret service pensions from Newcastle, indicating the years during which they drew these pensions, their annual rate, and the total received; the list includes at the end a few Scottish and Irish peers but does not include those who received their pensions as "additional salaries". For biographical notes see again footnotes to the "Accounts".

¹ Add. MSS. 32920, ff. 102-3.

² *Ibid.* f. 315.

	Period during which Received. ¹	Annual Pension.	Total Received.
		£	£
The Earl of Warrington . . .	1754-58	1,500	6,000
The Earl of Radnor . . .	1754-56	800	2,000
The Earl of Peterborough . . .	1754-62	400	3,100
The Earl of Warwick . . .	1754-62 ²	500	4,500
The Earl of Tankerville . . .	1756-62	800	4,700
Viscount Saye and Sele . . .	1754-62	600	4,200
Lord Raymond . . .	1754-56	800	2,400
Lord Dudley . . .	1754-56	600	1,800
Lord Willoughby of Parham ³ . . .	1755-62	400	2,800
Lord Montfort . . .	1758-62	800	4,200
Lord Delamer . . .	1761-62	800	800
The Earl of Kinnoull ⁴ . . .	1754-58	800	3,200
The Earl of Home . . .	1754-58	200	800
The Earl of Leven . . .	1754	500	500
Lord Morton's Lords ⁵ . . .	1754-62	250	1,700
		(after 1759 £150)	
The Earl of Cork . . .	1756-62	800	4,400
Lord Dunmore (?) ⁶ . . .	1754-55	100	200
			47,300

¹ It must be remembered that payments made between November 1756 and July 1757 are not included in these accounts.

² He died in 1758, but the pension was continued at the same rate to his widow and to his daughter, Lady Charlotte Rich, and is here included.

³ He held, besides, a pension of £200 a year "payable per Paymaster". See Add. MSS. 33044, f. 9.

⁴ He had, besides, a hereditary pension of £1000 p.a. which had been granted to the 4th Earl and his heirs by Charles II on the surrender of their "fee" of Barbadoes and the Carribee Islands.

⁵ Lords Rutherford (£150), Kirkcudbright, and Borthwick (£50 each); Lord Rutherford died in 1759, but one-third of his pension was continued to his widow.

⁶ The identification is uncertain—the name as marked at first and subsequently scribbled over, looks like "Dromore", but there was no Lord Dromore at the time, whilst "Dunmore" is not free of difficulties either. The second payment of £100, on July 30, 1755, was to the recipient's executors, whereas William, 3rd Earl of Dunmore, did not die till December 1, 1756.

Who were these earls and lords in receipt of secret service pensions? Were they broad-acred noblemen who through their tenants could sway county elections, or owners of rotten boroughs who from the Upper House packed the Commons? Not in the least; in most cases they were men who had inherited the titles of their ancestors without their estates, and possessed little land and no boroughs. John (Rohartes), 4th and last Earl of Radnor of that creation, had succeeded his cousin in the title, whilst most of the estates and the Parliamentary influence in Cornwall went to a nephew of the 3rd Earl, George Hunt, M.P. for Bodmin. Edward (Rich), 8th and last Earl of Warwick, did not receive with his title any of the family estates. The similar case of Lord Saye and Sele has been mentioned before.¹ Ferdinando, 11th and last Lord Dudley, succeeded his uncle in that title, while the barony of Ward and the castle and lands of Dudley devolved on the Ward family. Lord Cork succeeded his distant cousin Richard, 4th Earl of Cork and 3rd Earl of Burlington, in his Irish honours, whilst the barony of Clifford and "the large estates of the Clifford and Boyle families" descended to his cousin's daughter, Charlotte, Duchess of Devonshire. Thomas, 2nd Lord Montfort, inherited his estate "in a very ruinous condition", and "incumbered with debts to the amount of above £30,000".² Lord Delamer was the heir to a barony and to the poverty of the Earl of Warrington. The Earl of Kinnoull was so poor that when his son, Lord Dupplin, married Miss Ernle, the heiress to Whetham in Wiltshire, "with £3000 p.ā.",³ this was considered a sad mésalliance for her;⁴ but Dupplin was Newcastle's close friend and faithful drudge,

¹ See pp. 221-3.

² Add. MSS. 32864, f. 524.

³ *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1741, p. 331.

⁴ It is described as such in a letter from her cousin, Miss Frances Ernle, to Mrs. Legh of Caveley, in Cheshire, in the possession of Mr. Roger Ernle Money-Kyrle, of Whetham, Wilts.

and this may have helped his father to the pension. As for "Lord Morton's Lords", the one thing besides the pension which they had in common was that so far none of them had been able to establish his claim to the title, to say nothing of estates; William Macdellan, Lord Kirkcudbright, "was in poor circumstances, and followed the occupation of a glover in Edinburgh";¹ Henry, Lord Borthwick, claimed a dignity which some of his predecessors had refrained from assuming, considering that "a title without a suitable fortune was not eligible";² while the position of George Durie, Lord Rutherford, can be gauged by the letter he wrote to Newcastle on October 12, 1757: "I have for these three years past paid a hundred pounds yearly to my creditors in London which put it out of my power to do any thing to purpose for my creditors in Scotland with whom I'm just now teased out of my life. . . ."³ In short, most of the men in this list can be described as noblemen living on the dole or on old age pensions; for these were not invented by modern Radicals, only their wide application is a sign of democracy and a concomitant of universal suffrage.

The theory of the "State paupers" is probably as old as the State itself; it is that those who form the political nation have, when in need, a claim to public support to be given them as their due, without loss of rank or citizen rights. Tacitus wrote of the Germanic warriors, that they expected to be supported by their leader; and in France, during the "Guerre du Bien Public", in 1466, the Duc de Nemours demanded from Louis XI that he should have justice done to the people and relieve them, and besides, that he should entertain the nobles "*et leur donner grosses pensions*".⁴ The same principle still prevailed in eighteenth-century England and was fully stated by Lord

¹ See Douglas-Paul, *Scots Peerage*.

² *Ibid*.

³ Add. MSS. 32875, f. 64.

⁴ Lavissee, *Histoire de France*, vol. iv. part ii. p. 344.

makes a total of £3000) to the aristocratic dole, we find that a round £50,000 was spent on it by Newcastle from secret service funds.

PAYMENTS FOR SERVICES

A curious feature of the secret service list is what may be called service pensions or "additional salaries". In the first place, there is in Roberts's accounts a quarterly blank with £1050 against it. In the alphabetical register of secret service pensions drawn up in April 1756¹ this blank appears under the letter "N", with a yearly total of £4200 marked against it. In another computation of "the total annual amount of private pensions"² the same sum appears against a discreet "N.B.", but in Newcastle's accounts, 1757-62, the matter is stated every time in plain, though apologetic terms: "Retain'd to myself by Your Majesty's special command—one quarter, £1050". The origin of this additional salary paid to Newcastle whilst at the head of the Treasury is fully shown in a paper which, judging by internal evidence, must have been drawn up in 1760 or early in 1761 to explain the matter to George III;³ the pension was given to Newcastle to make up for the financial loss which he suffered by exchanging the Secretaryship of State for the Treasury, and, seeing that Newcastle anyhow spent vast sums of his own money on what he considered the service of the King, this supplementary salary cannot be viewed in an invidious light.

¹ Add. MSS. 33038, ff. 497-8.

² Add. MSS. 33040, f. 31.

³ In Newcastle's "Memorandums for my Lord Hardwicke", December 23, 1760 (Add. MSS. 32999, f. 133) appears the following entry:

"To consider in what manner I should acquaint the King with my £4200 a year. To look out the paper from whence Mr. Jones made the average."

Comparison between the profits arising from the offices of Secretary of State and First Commiss^r of the Treasury.¹

At a medium, for seven <i>ordinary</i> years, (vizt. from 1747 to 1753 inclusive) the clear profits of the office of Secretary of State, appear to have amounted to	£5780
The neat income of the office of First Commissioner of the Treasury, in the year 1754, with the Land Tax at 2s. in the pound, appears to have been	1480
The private addition to the Duke of Newcastle was	4200
	<u>£5680</u>

N.B.—The two last sums added together, do not make the neat income so much as it was, at a medium, for seven *ordinary* years, in the Secretary of State's office, by one hundred pounds *pr. an.* :—and the Land Tax, being now, and having been for several years, *four* shillings in the pound, makes a further deduction of £120 *pr. an.*, which, if added to the abovementioned £100 *pr. an.*, would make the deficiency 220£ *pr. an.*

N.B.—The year of an accession to the Crown, has always encreas'd. the profits of a Secretary of State very considerably. The present year will do so in a *more than ordinary* manner, on account of the *extraordinary* number of military commissions.

To this paper is appended another drawn up by James West and explaining the way in which the income of the First Lord of the Treasury was calculated.²

Net income of the Office of First Commiss^r of the Treasury, July 2, 1754.

The Salary, as first Commissioner of the Treasury	£1600	0	0
New-Years-Gifts, as a Lord of the Treasury	40	19	0
	<u>£1640</u>	19	0
Deduction of 6[d] <i>pr.</i> £	£40		
Land Tax at 2s. <i>pr.</i> £	120		
	<u>£160</u>	0	0
	<u>£1480</u>	19	0

As the Land Tax encreases, the net income is less—J. WEST.

¹ Add. MSS. 33039, ff. 309-10. The paper is in H. V. Jones's handwriting.

² *Ibid.* f. 311. The document is marked "Copy", and is also in Jones's hand.

Newcastle's additional salary, which was paid for all his time at the Treasury, barring one month prior to his resignation in November 1756, makes in his secret service accounts a total of £30,538 : 19 : 2 $\frac{3}{4}$.

Similarly, an additional salary of £1500 p.a. was paid to Lord Halifax, President of the Board of Trade, 1748-61. "A great deal was done at different times to gain and soothe my Lord Halifax", wrote the 2nd Lord Hardwicke in a note on a draft of a letter from his father to Newcastle.¹ The pension was obviously a *douceur* of this kind, but it started before Newcastle came to the Treasury, and the circumstances in which it originated are not known to me. It stopped on Halifax going as Lord Lieutenant to Ireland—the entry on May 7, 1761, is marked "This is to be the last payment"; and Halifax's additional salary stands for a total of £10,125 in Newcastle's secret service accounts. Whatever view one may take of Halifax as a politician, he did good and honest work at the Board of Trade, and there was more justification for this payment than for nine out of ten openly avowed pensions; but it was presumably given in that form in order not to make it a precedent for his successors or provoke similar demands from his colleagues.

Two other well-earned pensions were, that of £400 p.a., paid, with a short interval in 1755, to Sir John Fielding, the magistrate who made London a safe place for decent people to live in; and £200 p.a. to Thomas Lane, Chairman of the Quarter Sessions of Middlesex. Both had presumably to be secret, not to offend some proprietries or conventions. The total paid to them by Newcastle, 1754-62, was £3950.

Another pension which, although paid to a Member of Parliament, must be treated as a salary, for it was given to the office-independent of its holder, was £500 paid every

¹ Add. MSS. 35417, f. 80.

year about Lady Day to the Chairman of Committees in the House of Commons. As such, J. S. Charlton received from Newcastle, 1754-61 (both years included but not the spring of 1757, when Newcastle was not in office) £3500, and his successor, Alderman Marsh Dickenson, £500; together, £4000.

Lastly, there were two pensions classified by Newcastle as "additional salaries", £400 p.a. to Lord Ilchester and £1000 p.a. to Baron von Münchhausen. It is not clear what real work was ever done by Ilchester, Joint Comptroller of the Army Accounts, 1747-1776, and his pension looks more like part of the spoils which his brother, Henry Fox, the most rapacious of eighteenth-century statesmen, succeeded in obtaining for his family at the expense of the King and the nation. It may also have been a retaining fee for his borough interest at Shaftesbury—there is an entry about it in connexion with the general election of 1754.¹ Still, as it is of such a mixed character, I follow Newcastle's classification and include it among the salaries—it makes a total of £3300 during Newcastle's tenure of office. As for Münchhausen, he was a Hanoverian, and the work he did was for the Electorate rather than for Great Britain; I therefore include his pension among the King's gifts and payments to Germans.

The additional salaries to Newcastle, Halifax, Ilchester, the magistrates, and the Chairman of Committees, make a total of almost £52,000.

At the other end of the scale stand the salaries paid out to the *canaille*, to hired journalists and pamphleteers, and to secret agents and spies. William Guthrie, James Ralph, and David Mallet, whose lives and works are recorded in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, are in the first category, the "propaganda department"; their hire during Newcastle's term of office amounted to a joint

¹ Memorandum of March 25, 1754; Add. MSS. 32995, f. 126.

£4000.¹ The anti-Jacobite spies were John Gordon of Sempill, an old driveller who remained active throughout the period and had a half-illiterate "transcriber" paid to copy his nonsense; Alexander "Pickle" (1754-55), one of the most prominent dealers in Jacobite romances; Allan Macdonald, another spy, on "the Highland service"; and possibly also Fitzgerald, whose funeral was paid for with secret service money in March 1755. Their joint takings were £1940 : 10s. Next come the foreign agents: Springer, "the Swedish merchant who has suffer'd so much"—he had acted as British agent, had been imprisoned a few years by the French party in Sweden, in 1758 found a refuge in England, and was given a pension of £100 p.a.; it makes a total of £600 in Newcastle's accounts. Mr. Tyrrel, "the French officer who was employed in matters of secrecy by Colonel Lawrence in Nova Scotia", had a pension of £200,² and received a total of £1050. Thierry (misspelled Querré), the French pilot who directed the British attack against Rochefort in 1757, received during the following four years £750. £100 were issued on April 13, 1759, "to the person who sends the intelligence to the Duke of Devonshire", and £50, in 1759-60, "to Mr. Reiche, for the French commissary who gave intelligence to Prince Ferdinand". Thus £2550 can be traced as spent on foreign agents.

¹ Guthrie had £200 p.a. (about him see footnote in the secret service accounts under June 20, 1754); Ralph had £300 p.a. (see under October 24, 1754); Mallet had no regular pension but was given £200 for his attack on Admiral Byng (see under November 9, 1756).

² In "An Account of Payments made by Lord North", submitted to George III by John Robinson on the fall of the North Government in 1782, there still appears, under the heading of "Payments for Intelligence and for Secret Service", the entry: "Mr. Tyrell £200" (see Add. MSS., 37836, f. 139).

THE FRIENDS OF FRIENDS, AND OTHERS

If Members of the two Houses could expect, when in need, to be supported from the "bounty" of the King, next came their friends for whom they themselves could not provide, or found it more convenient, if possible, to provide at the expense of the State.

The Duke of Hamilton had a poor cousin, James Hamilton,¹ and asked Henry Pelham to give him a consulship in the Mediterranean, or a place in the Customs or the Excise; Pelham promised to do so, and in the meantime, as an earnest of his goodwill, gave him an annuity of £200 from secret service funds. When Pelham died, the Duke of Hamilton, in his letter of condolence to Newcastle, asked that the pension be continued—"this is all the young gentleman has at present to subsist upon". The "young gentleman" occasionally raised again the question of a place, but meantime subsisted on this "retaining fee", which was still paid when Newcastle left the Treasury in 1762, and in his secret service accounts is responsible for a total of £1400.

Thomas Burrowes was esquire-beadle to the University of Cambridge, of which the Duke of Newcastle was the Chancellor. This, of course, was a sufficient reason for Burrowes to be given a pension of £100 a year from secret service money; it makes a total of £800 during Newcastle's term at the Treasury.

"Count" Hewett was a protégé of the Duke of Portland, G. L. Scott had been tutor to the Prince of Wales, Mr. Allen was a nephew of Speaker Onslow, Mr. Cooke was a friend of Gybbon, the oldest Member in Parliament, Mr. Langford was son-in-law to Thomas Sergison, Newcastle's nominee for the borough of Lewes, etc., etc., and so they were all in receipt of pensions from secret service funds.

¹ See accounts under April 26, 1754.

The persons of these distant friends to the Government are so unimportant that in many cases their names never appear—one merely reads about “Lord Rockingham’s two friends”, “Sir Jacob Downing’s man”, or “Mr. W. Leveson-Gower’s friend”. Moreover, there is a regular “Speaker’s List” of £360 a year, a compliment to the distinguished Speaker Onslow, continued to him even after he had retired from the Chair and the House.¹

Further, there were some special cases calling for sympathy and help, *e.g.* of those who had been deprived of their jobs, sinecures, and their livelihood through the loss of Minorca. Mr. Charles Hamilton, ninth son of the 6th Earl of Abercorn, had been Receiver-General of the island, and as a compensation for his loss was given a secret service pension of £1200 p.a.² Dr. Molesworth, sixth son of the 1st Viscount Molesworth, had been made in 1735 “physician to [the garrison of] Minorca, by the late Queen”, and was now “starving”; he was therefore given a pension of £200 per annum.³ Henry Poole, the son of Sir Francis Poole, Bart., M.P., by his wife, Frances, née Pelham, had been Deputy-Paymaster and the family

¹ The list is of a perfectly harmless and non-political character; this, *e.g.*, was its composition in 1754 (Add. MSS. 33038, f. 354):

Sir Marc Molynæx	.	.	.	£100	0	0
Mrs. Goode	.	.	.	100	0	0
Mr. Glover	.	.	.	20	0	0
Mrs. Forbes	.	.	.	25	0	0
Mr. Hill	.	.	.	17	10	0
Mr. Wattleton	.	.	.	17	10	0
Mr. Camber	.	.	.	17	10	0
Mrs. Denyer	.	.	.	17	10	0
Mrs. Benbrick	.	.	.	15	0	0
Mrs. Hayman	.	.	.	10	0	0
Mrs. Smith	.	.	.	10	0	0
Catherine Martin	.	.	.	10	0	0
				£360	0	0

² See accounts under August 5, 1757.

³ See accounts under December 21, 1758.

were "starving by the loss of their place in Minorca"—he was given £500 p.a.¹

Lastly, one finds in the secret service accounts gifts and pensions of which the payment from that money would seem incomprehensible had it really been treated as a fund for political corruption, and not primarily as the King's private money which he could use according to his pleasure and without the knowledge of Tom, clerk in the Treasury, Dick, M.P., and Harry, candidate for anything which others have succeeded in obtaining. There was a "Lutheran clergyman", and subsequently his widow, in receipt of £20 p.a., and Mr. Capel Hanbury, M.P. for Monmouthshire, was paid every year £100 for the dissenting ministers of his county. Colonel Clavering, "who brought the news from Guadeloupe", was given by the King's order £500, and Major Wedderburn the same for bringing the account of the battle of Fillinghausen; Colonel Fitzroy and Captain Ligonier, £500 each, as aides-de-camp to Prince Ferdinand; Garstin, "the messenger", £50 for bringing the news of a victory of the King of Prussia. Sir Francis Eyles Stiles, Commissioner of the Victualling Board, received £300 by the King's order "to enable him to go abroad for the benefit of his health." Finally, there are two mysterious ladies in receipt of pensions, a Mrs. Krahé and a Mrs. Cannon, who, on further investigation, turn out to have been, the first, "an old servant of the late Queen Caroline", and the other, "midwife to the royal family".

The total of secret service money thus spent on distant friends, humble relations, and what might be called inmates of the casual wards, amounted during Newcastle's term at the Treasury to a total of almost £40,000.²

¹ See secret service accounts under December 19, 1758.

² The following case, though it did not enter into the secret service budget, may serve as an illustration of the degree which

THE HANOVERIANS

“ I replied only, it is Your Majesty’s own money ; you

“ providing ” at the expense of the State assumed in the eighteenth century.

John Twells, “ the Duke of Newcastle’s domestic apothecary ”, held a sinecure in the Customs—he was Accountant of Petty Receipts, and had in “ net salary and allowances ” £531 : 18 : 6 p.a. (see Add. MSS. 38334, f. 211). In the massacre of the Pelhamite innocents, which Bute and Fox perpetrated about the New Year of 1763, Twells was marked down for dismissal. His merits and sufferings are best related in the words of his own patrons.

The Duke of Newcastle to Lord Hardwicke :

Claremont. Jan^{ry} 5th, 1763 [Add. MSS. 32946, f. 67].

. . . these barbarous men intend to turn out poor Mr. Twells, of a place I gave him . . ., in consideration of seventeen years constant attendance upon the Dutchess of Newcastle in all her illnesses ; and who is perfectly well acquainted with them, and apprized of all, that Sir Edward Wilmot, and Dr. Shaw did, whenever she had them. . . .

The Duchess of Newcastle to Lord Halifax (at that time Secrstary of State) :

Claremont. Jan. the 5th, 1763 [Add. MSS. 32946, f. 70].

Mr. Twells, is a physical person, and was in a very good way, but left his profession singly to attend me, when I had a very tedious illness ; and as my state of health has been more uncertain, ever since that time, than it was before, he has been constantly with me. Yr. Lordship will easily see how incumhent it was upon me, to get something done, for a person so very necessary to me, and who had given up ev’ry other prospect in life, upon my account.

Lord Halifax to the Duchess of Newcastle :

Bushey Park. Sunday night. Jan^{ry} 9th, 1763. [*Ibid.* f. 81]

. . . I lost no time after the receipt of your Grace’s letter, but found strong reason to think it a desperate one. . . .

Meantime “ the unheard-of cruelties ” which Newcastle received from Bute brought his blood into an “ extreme bad state ”, and on January 12 it was the Duchess who had to write to Lord Hardwicke about Mr. Twells (*ibid.* ff. 95-7). She informed him that the Duke had “ already order’d an annuity, equal to the value of Mr. Twells’s employment to be settled on him for his life ”, and inquired in her own and the Duke’s name what Hardwicke would think of their apply-

may do with it what you please.”¹ This was the mid-eighteenth century view about the Civil List money in general; and secret service money was in an even more special sense the King’s own “private account”. George II had his Hanoverian friends; they were not popular in England; still, when Lords and Members of Parliament could billet friends on the “King’s bounty”, surely the Elector of Hanover was fully justified in providing for some of his own men from that source. Thus Philip Adolph, Baron von Münchhausen, Hanoverian resident in England, had a secret service pension of £1000 a year which was continued to him even under George III²; and George Schutz, son of George II’s great favourite, Augustus Schutz, had £400 a year. Their two pensions together made a total of almost £12,000 under Newcastle. In December 1757, £2000 were given to the Hereditary Prince of Wolfenbüttel, and various presents, similar to those

ing to Bute to save the poor man. Hardwicke, in his letter of January 13, advised them not to do so (*ibid.* ff. 100-101) but added:

. . . this last instant of Mr. Twells is not only the most cruel, but the most ungentlemanlike and lowest of all;—in case it shall take place, which I can hardly force myself to believe. For this reason I hope that any other provision, which my Lord Duke shall make for Mr. Twells, will be penn’d conditionally and eventually in case his present place shall be taken from him, and no other of a proper value given to him.

In 1765 the advent of the Rockinghams restored “truly constitutional government” to this poor harassed country, and Mr. Twells to his place in the Customs.

¹ See Newcastle about his interview with the King, p. 224. Such was the old theory; for the more modern view, see George Grenville’s speech in Parliament on February 28, 1769: “. . . the civil list is the money of the public” (Cavendish, *Debates*, vol. i. p. 273).

² This was probably obtained through Lord Bute; the following entry occurs in the “Register of Correspondence of the Earl of Bute” (Add MSS. 36796, f. 61): December 16, 1760. “Münchhausen to the Earl of Bute. Thanks for assurances of friendship, and for his kind representations to the King on his behalf.”

mentioned before to English officers, were made to Germans who brought the news of victories, acted as aides-de-camp to the King of Prussia or Prince Ferdinand, etc. In 1758, £1500 were spent on a sword, and in 1759 another £1500 on a "George", for Prince Ferdinand; and under date of February 12, 1756, appears a *douceur* of £500 to Michel, the Prussian Minister in London.

The payments from secret service funds to Germans during Newcastle's term of office make about £21,000.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The total of secret service money spent by Newcastle from the Treasury during his two terms of office March 1754–November 1756 and July 1757–May 1762 amounted to £290,848 : 17 : 2½, or in round figures, £291,000. Of this, £55,500 were spent on elections and constituencies, and £68,500 in pensions to Members of Parliament—thus £124,000, *i.e.* almost 43 per cent, were spent on the House of Commons; £50,000 were doled out to the aristocracy, £56,000 went in additional salaries and to secret agents, £40,000 to friends of friends to the Government, and £21,000 to Germans. The vast engine of Parliamentary corruption called "secret service money", when measured, has proved surprisingly small in size, a mere supplement to places and other open favours; and on further inquiry it is found that there was more jobbery, stupidity, and human charity about it than bribery. "For the wicked are more naïve than we think; and so are we ourselves." But the Duke of Newcastle was not even wicked, nor were Sir Robert Walpole and Henry Pelham, George III and Lord North.

END OF VOL. I

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